



SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

OF

**Hon. Surendranath Banerjea**

SELECTED BY HIMSELF

FIRST EDITION

G. A. NATESAN & CO., MADRAS

PRICE RS. THREE





## PREFACE.

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The Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjea is a remarkable figure in the public life of India. The speeches and writings published in this volume cover a period of over forty-two years. They are not only a record of the strenuous work of one of the most devoted of our public men, but a history of the public movements of his time with which Mr. Surendranath Banerjea has been so prominently associated. In one sense, it is a history of the times and of the revolution of Indian public life. They are the record of the politics of India during perhaps the most momentous period of Indian development. Their study will really be the study of the growth of Indian national life in its most formative period. The speeches cover a wide field dealing with a variety of topics, political, educational, municipal and industrial. They are co-extensive with the many-sided activities of Mr. Surendranath Banerjea.

At the request of the publishers, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea has kindly selected the speeches himself, and they give the reader a kaleidoscopic view of his activities.

## DADABHAI NAOROJI'S SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.

This is the first attempt to bring under one cover an exhaustive and comprehensive collection of the speeches and writings of the venerable Indian patriot, Dadabhai Naoroji. The first part is a collection of his speeches and includes the addresses that he delivered before the Indian National Congress on the three occasions that he presided over that assembly; all the speeches that he delivered in the House of Commons and a selection of the speeches that he delivered from time to time in England and India. The second part includes all his statements to the Welby Commission, a number of papers relating to the admission of Indians to the Services and many other vital questions of Indian administration. The appendix contains, among others, the full text of his evidence before the Welby Commission, his statement to the Indian Currency Committee of 1898, his replies to the questions put to him by the Public Service Committee on East Indian Finance. Dadabhai has been in the active service of his motherland for over sixty years and during this long period he has been steadily and strenuously working for the good of his countrymen; it is hoped that his writings and speeches which are now presented in a handy volume will be welcomed by thousands of his admiring countrymen.

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*We want self-government finally for the highest ends of national system, for the moral elevation of our people. Political inferiority involves moral degradation. It is galling to our self-respect. The mind and the conscience of a free man are not the mind and conscience of a slave. A nation of slaves would never have produced a Patanjali, a Buddha, or a Valmiki. We want self-government in order that we might wipe off from us the badge of political inferiority and lift our heads among the nations of the earth and fulfil the great destinies that are in store for us under the blessing of Divine Providence. We want self government not only in our own interests but for the sake of humanity at large.*

*—Page 140.*

*We believe in our cause, we believe that persistency in constitutional agitation will culminate in the triumph of that cause, and above all we believe in the sense of justice and the sense of liberty of the English people. We shall, therefore, continue this agitation, and with your help and under God's providence we are bound to win in the noblest contest that has ever warmed the hearts or inspired the energies of men.*

*—Page 336.*



SPEECHES  
OF  
**BABU SURENDRANATH BANERJEA**

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**THE STUDY OF INDIAN HISTORY.**

*(The following address on the "Study of Indian History" was delivered by Babu Surendranath Banerjea at the Anniversary Meeting of the Young Men's Union, Calcutta, 24th June 1876.)*

GENTLEMEN,

Those who have their eyes open, and are capable of observing what is going on around us, cannot fail to be painfully impressed with a fact, which we would all do well seriously to ponder over. We have amongst us writers in almost all the varied branches of human knowledge. We have poets, novelists, critics, translators, writers on law, mathematics, philosophy, and even on some of the abstruse<sup>1</sup> branches of physical science. But there is one great department of human knowledge, which remains almost wholly unexplored by us, yet it is a department which would yield treasures of priceless value to the ardent inquirer, where we would roam amongst the relics of our former greatness, where we would hold communion with the masterminds of ancient India, with Valmiki and Vyasa, Panini and Patanjali, Gautama and Sankaracharya. I purpose this evening, gentlemen, to draw your attention to this noble study, the study of the history of our own country. I purpose to point out its multifarious advantages. I purpose to show



that the study of the history of our own country, while, perhaps, it cannot be said to possess that fascinating interest, which belongs to those branches of human knowledge which have reference to the amelioration of the miseries, or the promotion of the happiness of our race, nevertheless, presents topics of deep and living interest, and round which, the heart of the truly genuine patriot might cling with devout and reverential affection. The study of the history of our own country illustrates in a striking manner the great truth, that miserable and degraded as we are, our degradation has followed upon a chain of sequences, every link of which is explicable, that the iron hand of Fate has not been upon us, that we have not been made the hopeless victims of unprecedented calamities, and that whereas circumstances have wholly controlled our destinies, we might, if we chose, have partially controlled those circumstances, and thus have changed the face of India, and perhaps of the world at large. Such an assurance is calculated to fill us with hope, to inspire us with enthusiasm and to add stimulus to those noble and patriotic efforts, which are being made on all sides around, and which seem to me to be typical of a regenerated nationality into which, I fervently hope, we are now about to enter.

\* \* \* \* \*

Up to this time, gentlemen, my attention has been confined to what might be called the objective advantages to be derived from the study of the history of our own country. I now pass on to the consideration of some of the subjective advantages, advantages affecting the human mind, to be derived from the study of the history of our own country. The study of the history of our own country, and indeed the study of all history, is calculated to restrain the exuberance of the imagination. \* \* Now, I

say, gentlemen, that next to physical science, I know of no subject which is so well calculated to restrain the exuberance of our imagination as the study of history.

But there remains yet another subjective advantage, to be derived from the study of Indian History, of greater moment and wider import than the one to which I have already referred. The study of the history of our own country furnishes the strongest incentive to the loftiest patriotism. I ask, what Hindoo is there, who does not feel himself a nobler being altogether, as he recalls to mind the proud list of his illustrious countrymen, graced by the thrice-immortal names of a Valmiki and a Vyasa, a Panini and a Patanjali, a Gautama and a Sankaracharya? I ask, what Hindoo is there, whose patriotism is not stimulated, whose self-respect is not increased, as he contemplates the past history of his country? For ours was a most glorious past. We were great in literature, in science, in war, but, above all, great in morals. I would detain you for hours and hours together, were I to expatiate upon the points of beauty and excellence connected with the wonderful language and literature of our fathers. But, I think, gentlemen, I should more profitably occupy your time, if I were to pass on to the consideration of some of those scientific truths, which the ancient Aryans of India have bequeathed to us as a priceless legacy.

Well, then, our ancestors were the inventors of the decimal notation; and without the decimal notation, the world could not go on for a day. It is of use in the pettiest commercial computations, as well as in the most difficult astronomical calculations. The ancient Hindoos made considerable progress in the science of geometry, and in trigonometry, enunciated problems which were not known even in Europe till about the 16th century. But it is in

the science of algebra that the Hindoo mind displayed to the best advantage its marvellous power and resources. The Hindoos were the inventors of the science of algebra. The first Arab writer on algebra was Mahomed Musa Karizmi. Now, there could be no doubt that he obtained his algebra from the Hindoos. He abridged an astronomical work founded upon the Indian system, and he was the first to communicate to his countrymen the Indian method of computation. A writer who knew so much of Indian mathematics, who was familiar with our astronomy and our method of computation, might reasonably be presumed to have been familiar with our algebra as well. Indeed, the Arabs do not lay any claims to originality in this respect. And it also appears that the Greeks were indebted to the Hindoos for their algebra. The first Greek writer on algebra was Diophantus. And we have strong reasons for believing that Diophantus is under very great obligations to the Hindoos for his algebra. In 1579, Bombelli published a treatise on algebra. Bombelli says, in this work, that he had translated a part of Diophantus, and found that Diophantus cites Indian authorities. Thus, then, Diophantus was familiar with the Indian writers on algebra, and as he often cites them as his authorities, it must be presumed that he was greatly indebted to them.

Passing now from the domain of mathematics, let us dwell for a few moments on the achievements of the Hindoos in some of the other departments of science. The Hindoos had made considerable progress in chemistry. They knew how to prepare sulphuric acid, nitric acid, muriatic acid and a great many other chemical substances. We have also good reasons for believing that the Arabs got their chemistry from the Hindus; and it was the Arabs who first introduced chemistry into Europe. We are thus

then driven to the conclusion, that that great science whose wonderful results fill the world with so much admiration, and which have contributed in no small degree to promote human happiness and ameliorate human suffering, was of Indian origin. Nor were the Hindoos behindhand as regards the science of medicine. The Arabs openly acknowledge their obligations to our ancestors in this respect. Indeed, so great was their respect for the Hindoo physicians, that two of their number, Saleh and Manka, were retained at the court of Harun-al-Rashed.

But the Hindoos were not only great in literature, in science, they were likewise great in war. The Hindoo books treat of the subject of tactics. The division of the army into centre, flank, wings and reserve, was recognised. Rules are laid down for the order of march and the choice of position. The subject of encampment also received attention.

But the point which possesses the deepest interest in connection with Hindoo military science, is the question as to whether our ancestors had any knowledge of firearms. Sir Henry Elliot and perhaps also Professor Wilson incline to the view that the ancient Hindus were acquainted with the use of firearms. Sir Henry Elliot conjectures that they were of an explosive character. The opinions of Wilson and Elliot derive considerable support from the testimony of Greek authors—from the testimony of Philostratus, of Themistius, of Ctesias and Delian. But, gentlemen, in spite of the weight which must always belong to the opinions of such eminent Oriental scholars as Wilson and Elliot, I am led to believe from arguments\* which, I

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\* These arguments are as follows:—If the ancient Hindoos were familiar with the use of firearms of any kind, how came they to lose all such knowledge? Is it at all likely, considering the advantages which such a knowledge would confer, that they should

am afraid, time will not permit me to enter into, that our ancestors had probably no knowledge of firearms.

But the ancient Hindoos were not only great in literature, great in science, great in war, they were above all great in morals. If our country had produced no other great man than Sakya Muni, I conceive we should have been entitled to the gratitude of posterity. The two greatest characters that have adorned the annals of humanity are undoubtedly Jesus Christ and Sakya Muni. It will not be for me to institute any comparison between these two illustrious worthies of our race. Mine will not be the hand that will tear down the veil of sanctity with which the veneration of ages has enshrouded these gifted mortals. I am more concerned here to-night to point out the moral grandeur of ancient India, as typified and exemplified in the

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ever have forgotten the use of firearms, and forgotten it so completely that it is now a matter of warm disquisition as to whether they ever possessed any such knowledge? The necessity there would be, in a rude and turbulent age, of constantly taking the field, whether for purposes of offence or defence, would keep up and improve the knowledge of firearms, and it is easy to see how upon such knowledge the national existence would often depend. Unless, therefore, a satisfactory explanation is given as to how the Hindoos came to lose all knowledge of firearms, we are afraid, we must conclude that firearms were not known amongst them. Then, again, we know that it was the bow which the ancient Hindoos chiefly relied upon in the field of battle. Now, if they possessed any kind of firearms, it seems scarcely likely that they should have given the preference to a weapon infinitely inferior in point of usefulness to firearms. Finally, we know that from the earliest times elephants formed an important part in the Indian army. Now this could hardly have been the case, if firearms were in use. The great objection to employing elephants in modern warfare is, that they are apt to take fright at the report of guns. Unless, therefore, we suppose that the nature of elephants has, in these modern times, undergone a complete change, they could not have been employed so much in the field as the ancient Aryans appear to have done.

The above points seem to require explanation before we should feel ourselves at liberty to accept the views of Elliot and Wilson.

life of the great founder of Buddhism. Have the pages of history a nobler instance of self-sacrifice to record than that of Sakya Muni? Born the heir to a magnificent principality, with troops of servants to obey his behests, with a loving wife and affectionate parents, he resolved to forswear the temptations of his lofty position, to rise high above them, and to consecrate his life and his energies to the great task of preaching to the benighted nations of the earth, the saving lessons of truth and religion. High mountains, broad rivers, impervious forests, the horrors of the stake, the sword of the executioner, the knife of the assassin, presented no obstacles to the slow, the silent, the steady progress of the religion of Gautama Buddha. From the frozen waters that skirt the coast of Kamaschatka to the extreme south of the island of Ceylon, from the green and verdant isles that fringe the Chinese seas to the arid steppes of Central Asia, Buddhism became the predominating religion. The shivering inhabitant of Siberia, the yellow-complexioned Chinese, the swarthy native of Ceylon, the semi-naked barbarian of the steppes, all acknowledged the great Hindoo as their apostle. Gentlemen, Sakya Muni was a Hindoo, and so are we; but I ask, where is his heroic and noble self-endurance, where his soul of fire, his heart of love, embracing within its bounds not only man but the whole range of animated beings, aught that could breathe, aught that could feel from the meanest protoplasm to man, the lord of creation? I ask you, gentlemen, whether standing in his presence, standing in the presence of this noble Hindoo, this illustrious scion of a royal race, who flung away the splendours of a throne, in order that he might become the apostle of humanity, you do not feel something of his noble and heroic self-endurance, something of his fervid patriotism, something of his boundless love for mankind?

If you do not, then I say, call not yourselves the countrymen of Sakya Muni, pride not yourselves on the splendour of his immortal achievements. There is a higher consanguinity than that of blood, a nobler relationship than that of fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives, the consanguinity—the relationship which arises from the unity and the harmony of sentiments, views and aspirations. If the noble example of Sakya Muni does not stimulate your patriotism and increase your self-respect, then, I say, you are not his countrymen though the same blood runs through your veins, the same sun warms you, the same moon emparadises your nights and the same vaulted canopy of heaven, bespangled with its myriads of stars, spreads like a pall over your head.

But, gentlemen, besides Sakya Muni, there were other lights, though not so bright or so gorgeous, which shone on the Indian firmament. It is not necessary that I should allude to them. Contemporary testimony is indeed unequivocal with regard to the moral excellence of the ancient Indians. I dare say, you have all heard of Arrian. He is the historian of Alexander's Indian expedition. Well, Arrian says in his "Indica"—and I quote this remark with a degree of pride and satisfaction, more to be conceived than described—Arrian says that, "No Indian was ever known to tell an untruth." This statement has been regarded as an exaggeration, and that even by so accomplished a scholar as Mr. Cowell. But it finds corroboration from a new and almost unexpected quarter. I have already had occasion to remark that, about the beginning of the 7th century of the Christian era, the great Chinese traveller, Hiouen Tshang visited India. Hiouen Tshang, we have already seen, had unexceptionable opportunities of forming a correct judgment with regard to

Indian affairs. Well, then, the following is Hiouen Thsang's estimate of the Indian character. He says :— "The Indians might be fickle, they might be frivolous, they might be volatile, but they knew not what fraud was." Thus, then, gentlemen, we have the testimony of two writers, separated by age, separated by country, separated by religion, separated by traditions, associations, habits and institutions, separated, in short, by every thing that constitutes the difference between man and man, uniting to speak in support of the character for truthfulness which our Aryan forefathers bore. And is it possible, in the face of the concurrent testimony of two such witnesses, witnesses whose reputation for veracity is so high, and one of whom, at least, had ample opportunities of forming a correct judgment about the Indian character, to regard the statement of Arrian, as an exaggeration? No, gentlemen, our ancestors were a most truthful people. They were likewise one of the bravest nations on the face of the earth. Arrian says, they were the bravest soldiers that Alexander encountered on the plains of Asia. In short, as regards everything that constitutes real manliness of character, as regards everything that constitutes true nobility of disposition, the Indians of those days outstripped all Asiatic races and have become the model for our guidance and our imitation.

Our great epic poems—the Ramayana and the Mahabharata—are a monument of the moral worth of our ancestors. Where shall we find a nobler character than that of a Rama or of a Yudisthira? Where shall we find sublimer precepts of morality than those taught in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata? The solemnity of pledges, the great duty of filial obedience, the absolute necessity of self-sacrifice in the discharge of solemn



obligations, the supreme virtue of chastity, the sacredness of truth, heinousness of perjury, are all enforced with a degree of eloquence, of pathos, of sincerity, of depth of conviction, as cannot fail to leave an impression on the mind of even the most careless reader of the Ramayana. \* \* \*

Gentlemen, let us sit at the feet of our ancestors and hold communion with the masterminds of ancient India. \* \* \* Approach reverentially the sacred records of your sires. Remember, that you are studying the sayings and doings of your revered ancestors, of those for whose sake alone you are now remembered, for whose sake alone the intellectual *elite* of Europe even now feel a deep and an ardent interest in your welfare. If you cannot attain the intellectual eminence of your ancestors, why not strive to emulate their moral grandeur. The road to moral greatness is not so steep, or so slippery. And permit me to remind you, that upon the moral regeneration of your country depends its intellectual, its social, and its political regeneration. \* \* \*

Gentlemen, I invite you to this noble task, the moral regeneration of your country, a task, in every way worthy of your highest ambition. \* \* If you indeed accomplish this noble task, your names will be emblazoned in characters of gold in the ineffaceable pages of history and will be handed down to remote posterity to receive the countless blessings of unborn generations. Gentlemen, you have your choice between a life of active and patriotic duty and a life of indifference, of carelessness, of disregard of sacred obligations. Countrymen of Valmiki and Vyasa, make your choice, and whether you choose the one line of conduct or the other, remember the hopes of posterity are centred in you and that your great fathers from their high places in heaven are looking down upon you.

## CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, POONA, 1895.

*(The following is the full text of the Presidential Address to the Eleventh Indian National Congress held at Poona 1895 :)*

### PRESIDENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you heartily for electing me as President of this Congress. I can conceive of no higher honour—no loftier trust—no more exalted dignity—than that to which you have summoned me by your united suffrages. The highest reward which in these days a public man may receive, next to the approbation of his own conscience, is the confidence of his fellow-countrymen. For him what higher mark of honour or what nobler incentive to duty could there be than his election as the President of an assembly like this which is the non-official Parliament of his nation? But great as the honour is, far higher is the responsibility which belongs to it. It is a part of the divine arrangement that where there is a privilege there is also a corresponding duty. Your President is not only your speaker; he is something more. It is his duty to maintain order, to regulate your proceedings and to facilitate the despatch of your business. Having regard to the magnitude of this assembly, this in itself would make a heavy demand upon the resources, physical and mental, of the strongest and the ablest among us. But your President has other duties imposed upon him. During the three days that the Congress is in session he is your spokesman, your organ, the right arm of your strength. He voices forth the spirit which animates you in your deliberations, the temper which guides you in the solemn and arduous task which lies before you. One may well stagger at a responsibility

so vast and so many-sided; but your forbearance and generosity is the saving element in the situation. The moment you induct any one into the chair—the moment you install him in his office—from that moment you accord him in an unstinted measure your sympathy and your support. You forgive him his faults—you overlook his mistakes—you help him in his task—and you send him forth to his work, with your prayers and your benedictions. It has been truly remarked that the manner in which people conduct themselves at a public meeting is some evidence of their capacity for Self-Government. Judged by this test you are past-masters in the art. (*Cheers.*) For I know of no assembly more orderly in its conduct, more differential to constituted authority, more firm in its adherence to its programme and yet withal more moderate in the expression thereof than these yearly gatherings of the National Congress. (*Hear, hear.*) Nay more, weak as your President may be, he and the Congress are supported by an unseen force of immense potency. The good wishes of the educated community follow us. They are present in spirit, if not present in body. They are watching our deliberations with intense interest. They pour forth their heart's prayer for the success of our work. (*Loud cheers.*)

#### CONGRESS MOVEMENT.

I was not a little amused and interested to read in an English newspaper the other day a statement to the effect that the women of my province had idolized the Congress, and that it had duly found its place in the Hindu pantheon. The fact is laid hold of by the writer as evidence of the superstition and ignorance of the people and their incapacity for representative institutions. I was not aware that any responsible Congressman had ever

asked for representative institutions for our women or for the masses of our people. However much we may love and respect our ladies, we do not think they are yet qualified for representative government. They are not even supposed to be qualified in England. Our demand is much more limited. We should be satisfied if we obtain representative institutions of a modified character for the educated community who by reason of their culture and enlightenment, their assimilation of English ideas and their familiarity with English methods of Government might be presumed to be qualified for such a boon. But it would be useless to traverse the statement or the inference which is sought to be deduced from it. It would be almost cruel to dissipate the little romance which has gathered round our great movement. But this I will say on your behalf, that God or no God, whether the Congress has found a place in the Hindu pantheon or not, it is enshrined in the hearts of the educated community of India—it excites their deepest reverence, stirs their most earnest enthusiasm—it is the God of their idolatry—it is indissolubly bound up with and forms part and parcel of the life of New India. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

#### CONGRESS SESSION AT POONA.

In addressing you on this occasion it is impossible not to advert for a moment to the circumstance of the Congress being held at Poona. This is the first time the Congress assembles in this great historical city. It was purely an accident that deprived Poona of the honor of being the birthplace of the Congress. The first Congress was to have been held here, but sickness broke out in the city, and the *venue* had to be changed to Bombay. But though deprived of this honour by an untoward accident, your citizens and the people of the Deccan at large

have had a great hand in the up-building of the Congress. Nearly two centuries ago your ancestors built up an empire which contended with Britain for supremacy in India. But those days of strife are past and gone. If war has its victories, peace also has her triumphs; and this Congress will remain to you and to those who have worked with you as a monument of your energy and of your devotion to the country in these times, when the triumphs of peace are the most enduring.

#### LOCAL CONTROVERSIES—A CRISIS AVERTED.

It would be mere affectation on my part were I to ignore these events which preceded the session of the Congress at Poona, and which for a time at least filled the public mind of India with alarm and anxiety. I am a stranger to your local politics and your local feeling. I have no right to judge. I have not the means to judge. Who am I that I should judge? But spectators sometimes see more of the game than the actual players. And this I will venture to say that those who were in favour of the Social Conference being held in the *Pandal* and those who were opposed to it were all animated by one common sentiment of devotion to the Congress movement. They differed in their methods. We who stand outside your local controversies, while we sympathise with the deep-seated convictions of all parties and admire the noble sacrifice which the Secretary of the Conference has made to restore amity and concord, must ask you to exercise mutual charity, and forbearance to forget and to forgive, and to unite in one common effort to make this Congress worthy of the capital of *Maharashtra*, and an example to all future Congresses. In this connection I cannot help expressing my sense of admiration at the conciliatory attitude so strikingly displayed by

Mr. Justice Ranade, Secretary of the Social Conference, at a critical stage in the history of the controversy to which I have referred. It averted a crisis which might have proved disastrous to the best interests of the Congress. The Congress owes a heavy debt of gratitude to Mr. Justice Ranade.

#### COSMOPOLITAN CHARACTER OF THE CONGRESS.

We cannot afford to have a schism in our camp. Already they tell us that it is a Hindu Congress, although the presence of our Mahomedan friends completely contradicts the statement. Let it not be said that this is the Congress of one social party rather than that of another. It is the Congress of United India, of Hindus and Mahomedans, of Christians, of Parsees and of Sikhs, of those who would reform their social customs and those who would not. Here we stand upon a common platform—here we have all agreed to bury our social and religious differences, and recognise the one common fact that being subjects of the same Sovereign and living under the same Government and the same political institutions, we have common rights and common grievances. And we have called forth this Congress into existence with a view to safeguard and extend our rights and redress our grievances. What should we say of a Faculty of Doctors who fell out, because though in perfect accord as to the principles of their science, they could not agree as to the age at which they should marry their daughters, or whether they should remarry their widowed daughters or not.

#### CONGRESS AND SOCIAL REFORM.

The Congress has now been in existence for eleven years. We have not as yet got a written constitution, though I hope, we shall provide ourselves with one

before we separate. But there has grown around us a body of usages, the unwritten customary law of the Congress, which govern our movement. If there is one principle more than another, which is uniformly accepted, and universally assented to, it is this—that, no matter what differences of opinion may exist among us as regards religious beliefs or social usages, they shall be no bar to our acting together in Congress—they shall not be permitted to interrupt the cordiality of our relations as Congressmen. Never was the truth of this remark more strikingly illustrated than in connection with the agitation on the Consent Bill. Congressmen and Congress leaders arrayed themselves on opposite sides. Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, whose ill-health we all deplore, and who if he were better would probably have occupied the chair which I so unworthily fill, strenuously opposed the Bill; our great leader, Mr. Allan Hume, was as strenuously in favour of it. Our political opponents fanned the flames. They looked forward to an approaching schism. They were disappointed. We rapidly closed our ranks. This controversy took place in the early part of 1891; the Congress of 1891 held at Nagpur was as successful as any of the previous Congresses had been. Ours is a political and not a social movement; and it cannot be made a matter of complaint against us that we are not a social organization any more than it can be urged against any of my lawyer friends that they are not doctors. Even in regard to political matters, such is our respect for the opinions of minorities, so far back as 1887, I think it was at the instance of Mr. Budruddin Tyabji, who once was our President and whose elevation to the Bench of the Bombay High Court is a matter of national congratulation, a resolution was passed to the effect that

where there is practical unanimity among a class, though in a minority in the Congress, that a question should not be discussed, it should forthwith be abandoned. We who show such great respect for the opinions of others deserve at least an equal measure of consideration from all, be they friends or be they otherwise.

#### DISSENSION IN THE CONGRESS CAMP.

There is special danger to which an organization, such as ours, is exposed and which must be guarded against. In the days of its infancy, when it is persecuted and reviled, the members stand fast together, their cohesion is great, and the compactness of the organization is in proportion to the pressure of adverse circumstances brought to bear upon it. But when these days are past and gone, when the sun of prosperity begins to shine upon it, when the prestige of victory comes to be associated with its honored name, when opposition has dwindled down to the proportions of an occasional and feeble protest, uttered by some journalist who is not abreast of the times and who has not perhaps forgotten his old love for the movement, then we are confronted with the danger of there being developed from within the seeds of dissension and dispute. Relieved from the pressure of adverse circumstances, the cohesion of the members is apt to grow less, their enthusiasm to cool and the consistency of the organization to give way to the demoralizing influence of success.

I am sure we have not yet arrived at the stage. We are still exposed to the taunts and jeers of our opponents—we are still regarded as a set of impracticable people—whose knowledge of all things, specially of finance, leaves much room for improvement. Our progress though satis-



factory, considering our opportunities and the short time we have been in existence as an organisation, is insignificant when compared with what we have yet to achieve before we reach the goal of our aspirations, the promised land of equal freedom and of equal rights with British subjects, which has ever been the dream of Congress leaders, and which when realized will constitute, in the words of the late Sir Madhava Row, "the soundest triumph of British administration and a crown of glory to British rule." Having regard to our achievements in the past, the possibilities which unfold themselves in the future, and the trust we have assumed to safeguard and extend the sphere of our rights, we should be false to ourselves if we did not stand shoulder to shoulder, forgetful of all differences, in the one common endeavour to uphold the national interests as represented by the Congress.

#### CONGRESS CONSTITUTION.

This leads me to the question of the constitution of the Congress. Having regard to recent events we must accord to it the forefront place—the place of honour—in our debates. I have referred to the usages, the unwritten law, of the Congress. It must be admitted that the time has come when we must clearly define these usages, and accord to them the deliberate and authoritative sanction of the Congress. The need of a constitution was felt very early in the history of our movement. We are fighting a constitutional battle, and it was felt that we should place our organisation upon a constitutional basis. So far back as the year 1887 at the Third Session of the Congress held at Madras, the very first resolution that was passed was a resolution appointing a Committee to draft a set of rules to be laid before the Congress on the

last day of its sitting. I will read to you the Resolution :—

That a Committee be appointed consisting of the gentlemen marginally enumerated to consider what rules, if any, may now be usefully framed in regard to the institution and working of the Congress with instructions to report thereon on the 30th instant.

In accordance with this Resolution the Committee reported on the 30th December, and a Resolution was passed to the effect that the rules be circulated to the Standing Congress Committees who were to work on them so far as practicable, and to report thereon to the next Congress. Let me reproduce the text of the Resolution :—

That the rules drafted by the Committee appointed under Resolution—stand over for consideration till next Congress, but that in the meantime copies be circulated to all Standing Congress Committees with the request that they will during the coming year act in accordance with these rules so far as they may seem to them possible and desirable, and report thereon to the next Congress with such further suggestions as to them may seem meet.

I regret to have to say that the matter was not reported to the next Congress which met at Allahabad and was not considered by them. It was not considered till 1894 at the Madras Congress of last year. In 1893, when the Congress met at Lahore, a strongly-felt wish was expressed in favour of providing the Congress with a constitution without further loss of time. It was, I think, those good and self-sacrificing men connected with the Anglo-Vedic College who urged upon us the need of a constitution. They pointed to their own great College as evidence of what might be done by organised effort proceeding upon a constitutional basis. Nothing however was done in 1893. It was too late to discuss the question. In 1894, at the last Session of the Congress held in Madras, the matter was again considered when the following Resolution was passed :—

That this Congress is of opinion that the time has come when the constitution of the Congress should be settled and rules and

regulations laid down as to the number of delegates, their qualifications, the localities for assemblage and the like, and with this view the Congress requests the Standing Committee of Poona to draw up draft rules and circulate them among the different Standing Congress Committees for their report; these reports together with the draft rules and the report thereon to be laid before the next Congress for consideration.

The Poona Committee have, I understand, at the last moment drawn up a body of rules which they have circulated to the Congress Committee. The Standing Congress Committee have not considered these rules and the reports are not before us. I have not the smallest desire to excuse the Standing Congress Committees elsewhere at the expense of the Poona Committee. They might easily have moved in the matter and appealed to the Poona Committee; but they took no action—they slept over the matter. I think we must all share the responsibility of this tardy action on the part of the Poona Committee. We are never tired of reminding the Government of their broken promises. The one charge which we urge against the Government—which we repeat *ad nauseam*—which we reiterate in season and out of season, is that they have made large promises which they have only inadequately redeemed, and that the measure of their performances fall short of the measure of their promises. Are we not in all conscience amenable to the same charge? We have more than once solemnly undertaken to provide the Congress with a constitution. More than once have we broken this promise. Our declarations are a dead letter. We have not carried them out. But it is no use lamenting over the past. Let the dead past bury their dead. Let us retrieve the mistakes and omissions of the past. Let us, before we separate, have a few well-defined rules which will embody existing practice and obviate future difficulties. We may follow

the precedent set by the Madras Congress of 1887; appoint a Committee to frame rules on the first day with instructions to report on or before the last day of the Congress. We need not circulate these rules to the Standing Congress Committees. That is the old plea for inaction. We shall not have any rules at all if we are to repeat the hapless experiments of former years. Nor need our rules be like the laws of the Medes and the Persians, rigid and inflexible, admitting of no change, no modification. If we find any rule working badly, there is nothing to prevent our changing it. I earnestly appeal to you, brother-delegates, as a fellow-worker and an old Congressman, to apply yourselves to this task. It will be evidence of your practical wisdom, of your ready recognition of public opinion, and of your capacity to adapt yourselves to the environments of your situation. A Congress with a constitution would be far more potent for good than a Congress without a constitution. A representative body like the Congress, organized upon a constitutional basis, cannot long exist by the side of a bureaucratic Government without powerfully influencing it for good. A Congress with a constitution would be the living protest of the educated community against a form of administration, where the will of the few and not the voice of the many prevails.

#### CONGRESS—ITS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

From the consideration of the constitution of the Congress we pass on to discuss the constitution of the Government of this country; and as in our own case, so also here, much remains to be done. At this stage, and standing upon the vantage-ground we happen to occupy, we may pause for a moment to take a brief retrospect of the past, if only to derive from it the inspiration and

guidance for the future. The illustrious men—I feel the less hesitation in bearing my humble testimony to their worth, as I was not one of them—who founded the Congress at Bombay—some of whom are dead and gone, whose memories we revere, and the memory of none do we cherish with a greater measure of reverence than that of the young, the versatile, the brilliant Kashinath Trimbak Telang—these illustrious men did not in their wildest dreams anticipate the great future which awaited their movement. In this connection I am reminded of the exquisite lines of Longfellow which occur in his “Spanish Student” describing the spirit which pervades the achievements of the man of genius. The man of genius, says he, finds around him

All the means of action ;  
The shapeless masses,—the materials.

They lie everywhere around him. Footsore and weary with travel he comes, and with the uncouth charcoal he inscribes on the wall. And lo and behold ! transfigured by the magic of his touch,

All its hidden virtues shine.

\* \* \* \*

It gleams a diamond.

The forces were there ; the materials were there ; they lay in shapeless masses. The hour had come ; the men were there. They communicated to them the Promethean spark, the celestial fire which made them instinct with life, and under their controlling guidance, the Congress has developed into a movement fraught with unspeakable blessings to generations of my countrymen yet unborn. The birth of the Congress had, indeed, been foreseen by the great men who had been associated with the Anglo-Indian Government in the early stages of its progressive development. Macaulay, speaking from his place in Parlia-

ment on the occasion of the enactment of the Charter Act, used language which had about it the ring of prophetic inspiration :

It may be, said he, that the public mind of India may so expand under our system as to outgrow that system; that our subjects, being brought up under good Government, may develop a capacity for better Government, that being instructed in European knowledge they may crave for European institutions. I know not whether such a day will ever come, but when it does come, it will be the proudest day in the annals of England.

We have met to celebrate this day, the proudest in the annals of England and India. The National Congress is the outcome of those civilizing influences which Macaulay and his co-adjutors were instrumental in implanting in the Government of this country. It has a brilliant record. I will claim this for the Congress that it has not taken up a single question which it has not brought within the range of practical politics, or which it has not brought nearer to solution. You took up the question of the separation of judicial and executive functions. It has been declared to be a counsel of perfection by so high an authority as Lord Dufferin. You took up the Excise question. In my Province, in the more crowded districts, the outstills have been abolished. You agitated for the reform of the Police. In my province a Police Commission was appointed, and, though the Police remains very much what it was, I must say that a genuine effort is being made by the Government to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission. You insisted in season and out of season upon the wider employment of our countrymen in the higher offices of State. The Public Service Commission was appointed; and, though I cannot congratulate the Government upon the manner in which it has dealt with the recommendations of the Commission as the outcome of their deliberations, the maximum limit of age for the Open Competitive

Examination was raised. Last but not least is the crowning triumph of the Congress in the recognition by the Government of the representative element in the reconstitution of the enlarged Councils.

But the subjective triumph of the Congress—its moral victories—are even more remarkable than its outward achievements. You have introduced a new spirit into the country. You have infused a new enthusiasm into your countrymen. You have brought together the scattered elements of a vast and diversified population—you have welded them into a compact and homogeneous mass—you have made them vibrate with the new-born sentiment of an awakened nationality—you have unified them for the common purposes of their political enfranchisement. Along with the new-born impulse which you have thus communicated, and which draws its inspiration from the living examples of English greatness, you have placed before your countrymen lofty ideals of public duty, which are slowly transforming the national character, imparting to the flexibility of the East, the stamina and the stability of the West. Above all, you have taught your countrymen to glory in the British connection and to seek to perpetuate it not by submitting to invidious and irritating distinctions, but by claiming to participate in full in the rights of British citizenship.

#### REFORM OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

Hitherto we had placed the reform of the Legislative Councils in the forefront among our topics of discussion. Then came the Councils Act of 1892 which reconstituted the Councils and enlarged their functions. What is our attitude with regard to this Act? Are we satisfied with it and with the manner in which it is being worked? I am afraid we must answer the question in the negative.

We regard the measure in the light of a cautious experiment which is being tried by the Government. Caution is an element of statesmanship. But caution carried to an excess—caution which is, but another name for timidity—is a mistake and may even amount to a blunder. We have no objection to the Government exercising due caution before it takes “a big jump into the unknown.” Weighted with the sense of its great responsibility, the Government must look around before it makes an important departure from the lines of its ancient policy. But what we complain of is, that the experiment might have been tried under conditions more favourable to its success, more consonant to the declarations which were made in Parliament by statesmen on both sides of the House at the time of the enactment of the measure. Mr. Gladstone looked forward to a living representation of the Indian people. Lord Salisbury was anxious that the machinery provided should give representation not to small sections of the people but to the living strength and the vital forces of the whole community. Have these anticipations been realized by the light of accomplished facts? In Bengal, seven elected members represent the living strength and the vital forces of a whole community of 70 millions of people. The Councils have been enlarged, but in no sense so as to provide even a tolerably moderate representation of the people. In the United Kingdom, a population of 40 millions is represented by 670 members. In Bengal, a population of 70 millions is represented by only seven elected members, or if you like, by 10 members if you take the nominated non-official members to represent the people, or by 20 members if you take the whole Council to represent the Province. The result is, that the election taking place under a



system of rotation, whole divisions are left unrepresented in the Council. Out of the 6 Divisions in Bengal at the present moment, the Presidency Division which is the most important, and the Chota Nagpur and Orissa Divisions, are left out in the representation. I am aware that this is a faulty arrangement which might be rectified by lumping up the Divisions, as is done elsewhere, so as to enable the whole Province to take part in the elections. But is it possible under any conceivable arrangement, by any form of administrative manipulation, to secure in the words of Mr. Gladstone, the living representation of the Indian people, or, in the words of Lord Salisbury, the representation of the whole community, and not of small sections of the people, without materially adding to the strength of the elective element in the Councils? But we are confronted with a difficulty on the very threshold. Under Section 1 of the Indian Councils Act of 1892, the maximum number of additional members for the Governor-General's Council is fixed at 16, and the maximum number of additional members for the Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay is fixed at 20; and as regards Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, the position seems to be still more unsatisfactory. The number of members for the Bengal Council is not to exceed 20, and that for the North-Western Provinces is not to exceed 15. Why in the Calcutta Municipality we have 75 members to represent a population of 700,000 inhabitants, and a much lesser number of rate-payers; in the District Boards in Bengal, the number varies from 10 to 40. In some of our more important Mofussil Municipalities, the number is more than 20; in most Municipalities having an average income varying from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000 a year, the number is fixed

at 18. But here, in the representation of great Provinces, in their Legislative Councils, the number is never to exceed 25, and is often less. I am well aware of the difficulties of the Government. They must have a standing majority in the Councils. They will say :

It is all very well for you to raise these objections. Your Council is a council of perfection, we admit. But there are practical difficulties in the way, which we, as practical administrators, must take note of. We must have a standing majority in the Councils. If we add to the elective element, we must add to the number of nominated members. The requisite number of officials may not be available at the Presidency Towns, or if available, their appointment to the Councils may lead to serious administrative inconvenience and may involve additional expense—a matter which is not to be overlooked in these days of poverty and impecuniosity.

We fully admit the force of these objections. But the difficulties are really not insuperable. They admit of easy solution. The Government need not appoint official members to the Council to secure a majority. There are plenty of people who, though non-officials, would in this respect serve them better than officials. The experience of public bodies, where officials and non-officials meet for the transaction of public business, entirely confirms this view of the matter. In the Calcutta Municipality, the proportion of elected members is two-thirds of the entire body. The Government is in a hopeless minority. The Chairman is an official and is appointed by the Government. He is the organ of the Government. Though in a minority, I have never known a Chairman fail to carry through any Resolution upon which he has set his heart. Whenever he wants it, he has a majority. The experience of the District Boards in Bengal entirely bears out the same view. One-half of the members are elected, the other half are nominated. The nominated members are not necessarily officials. The Chairman is the Magistrate of

the District. He holds the balance of power. He is the dictator of the situation. He rules the District Boards. In the Councils, the position of the Government will be still more favourable. The President will be the head of the Local Government, his prestige will be great, his personality will carry immense influence; and if the number of members be materially increased as we suggest, though only one-half of them should be nominated and among the nominated members there should be non-officials, the Government will still have a standing majority.

THE INDIAN COUNCILS ACT.

I say once again that if the Indian Councils Act is to be given effect to, in the spirit in which it was conceived by the distinguished statesmen who took part in its enactment, if it is to give to the people of India a living representation of the whole community and not of small sections of the people, the number of elected members must be sensibly increased; at any rate discretion should be given to the Government of India to increase the number, subject to such rules as the Government may think fit to make in that behalf. This can be easily done by a small modification of Section 1 of the Statute of 1892. Such a measure would strengthen the popular element in the Councils; but the Government would also share in the benefits which it would confer. A larger number of elected representatives in the Councils would place the Government in touch with the real opinion of the country. The voice that would be heard in the Councils would not be the voice of this party, or of that party, of this clique or of that, but the living voice of the Indian people.

I am well aware of the objections that will be urged against my proposal. It will be said: "You got the

Councils Act amended only the other day. It is too early to think of amending it again." To that I have an obvious reply to give: It is never too early to raise the cry for reform. We must cry betimes, cry late, cry incessantly, fill the air with our importunate clamour, and then only can we hope to move the Government to take any action. *Quieta non movere*, in the words of Sir Robert Walpole, is the accepted creed of all Governments. They never move except under the irresistible pressure of a public opinion which will admit no delay or postponement. You have your own experience to guide you in the matter. You began the agitation for the reform of the Councils in 1885. In Bengal, we began it earlier, and the concession was made to us, though not in complete accordance with our anticipations or our wishes, only so recently as 1892. In making the present demand we are encouraged by the unquestionable success which has so far attended the experiment which is being tried. Sir Charles Elliott, speaking from his place as President of the Bengal Legislative Council, thus bore testimony to the distinct accession of strength to the Council which the addition of the elective element has secured :—

I am quite satisfied in my own mind that the extension of the Council has materially added to its strength, and to its popularity and to its power of doing good for the country. Of the Hon'ble Members present, there are, I think, three whose term of office will come to an end before we meet next time and who may be re-elected or who may not. If they are re-elected, we shall welcome them back; if not, we hope we shall find in their successors, colleagues who are as generous and as zealous as they have been.

#### INTERPELLATION IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

The Councils have been reconstituted, and their functions have been enlarged. The most important addition to the functions of the Councils consists in conferring

upon members the right of interpellation. We are truly grateful to the Government for this right. It is an inestimable boon. No Government which did not feel strong in the strength of conscious rectitude would venture to confer such a boon upon a foreign dependency. In the dark days of the Second Empire in France, when repression was the order of the day, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies were deprived of this right.

It was the feeling of conscious rectitude that in the main led the Executive Council of the Government of India to recommend that this right should be conferred upon Members of Council. Sir Charles Elliott has let us into the secrets of his "prison house." He told us the other day from his place as President of the Bengal Legislative Council, that Sir George Chesney argued in the Executive Council that the Government had nothing to conceal. Lord Dufferin urged that it would often help the Government to dispel false reports and to clear up misconceptions which were embarrassing to the administration. Lord Dufferin never showed greater prescience. I will here only refer to two questions that were asked in the course of this year. A few months back it was reported in one of the Anglo-Indian papers of Calcutta—the *Indian Daily News*, I think it was—that the Government had it in contemplation to frame a new set of rules in connection with the Official Secrets Act with a view to render these rules more stringent in their operation. The report created a considerable stir. Articles appeared in the newspapers; the motives of Government were aspersed. A question was put in Council. The Chief Secretary replied that there was no truth in the report, and that the Government did not mean to take any action in regard to these rules. The misconception was removed—the ex-

citement disappeared. Take the other case. Some time ago there appeared a very sensational account of a murder case at Chittagong in one of the newspapers which, if true, implied a grave reflection upon the local officials. A question was put in Council. A very elaborate answer was given, and the conduct of the officials was placed in its proper light.

During the year now closing, ugly rumours were afloat to the effect that the Government intended to restrict the right. There went forth a unanimous protest against the proposed restriction from the Indian Press and from such organs of Anglo-Indian opinion as sympathised with the legitimate aspirations of the people. There was not, indeed, the shadow of a justification for the proposed restriction. Questions must always be more or less vexatious. To say that the questions were vexatious was to object to them, because they were questions. To say that the questions put were too many was to ignore the obvious circumstances of the situation. The Councils did not meet as often as might be expected—the opportunities for asking questions were limited, and they necessarily accumulated in the hands of members.

#### THE RIGHT OF INTERPELLATION.

It is, indeed, the unanimous testimony of officials and non-officials that the right has been exercised in a manner that is creditable to the members and conducive to the public interests. The writer on Indian affairs, in the *Times*, a discriminating judge in these matters, thus observes :—

The practical operation of the system indicates that the Viceregal forecast of its working, from Lord Ripon onwards, was the correct one. The questions asked in the Supreme and Provincial Legislatures during the past two years cover the whole area of Indian administration and of the economic interest of the people. With scarcely an exception, they have tended to a better

understanding between the rulers and the ruled ; and in important instances they have furnished a valuable opportunity of placing the actual facts before the public.

With regard to the exercise of the right in the Bengal Council, the same writer thus bears equally satisfactory testimony :—

In a forward Province like Bengal, with Calcutta as its capital, and a native Press extremely active if not always accurately informed, the practice of interpellation has proved even more useful. The Bengal Government has to deal with the chronic unrest arising out of the desire of the educated classes to enjoy an ever-increasing share of the higher posts of the Administration. The present Governor of Bengal has recognized the necessity of dealing with such aspirations in a spirit of fairness, and, indeed, of generosity. Sir Charles Elliott has opened up the higher offices of his Government to natives of India to an extent never dreamt of by his predecessors. ' It is only the confidence which Englishmen in India have in the practical sagacity and sound common sense of Sir Charles Elliott as an experienced administrator,' writes the leading Calcutta journal, ' that induces them to refrain from regarding with suspicion the liberal concessions which he has inaugurated, concessions which, as we have said, no other Government up to the present time has ventured to imitate. But a section of the Bengal Press by a curious misapprehension demands that all offices for which the Public Service Commission declared natives to be eligible shall forthwith be filled by a native, irrespective of the fact that there may be many European officers better qualified for the individual post. It is, of course, unsuitable for a Government to enter into newspaper controversies, and a misconception of this character becomes a source of a widespread political disquiet in Bengal. Fortunately a distinguished Hindu member of the Bengal Council put a question which embodied the general misapprehension and enabled the Government to correct it.

From non-official let us pass on to official testimony and the testimony which I am going to quote is that of no less exalted an official than Sir Charles Elliott. The late Lieutenant-Governor was a thorough-going official—some would prefer to call him a typical bureaucrat. But at any rate he was no mean judge of the matter. This was what he said from his place as President of the Bengal Legislative Council :—

I think you will agree with me that the results have not altogether met the anticipations which we formed. Somehow or other—it is difficult to say how—a sort of idea has grown up in the public mind that an interpellation must necessarily be hostile, and that an Hon'ble Member who puts an interpellation may be presumed to have a desire to heckle the Government or to expose its shortcomings in some way or another. I think it is most unfortunate that such a feeling should have grown up. It has been due to criticisms which have been passed on the style of questions put not so much in this Council as in the Councils of other Provinces, and I think in many cases these criticisms, whether applied to other provinces or applied to this Province, have not been altogether reasonable or sympathetic. I certainly feel that I have nothing very much to complain of as regards the spirit with which interpellations have been put here, but I think that we might put interpellations upon a better footing if it were thoroughly understood that the Government desire to deal with all the members of this Council as its trusted Councillors whom it wishes to associate with itself in its policy, and to whom it wishes to impart the information which it possesses.

Having regard to the testimony of the high authorities I have quoted, might we not ask for the removal of those restrictions which seem to me to defeat the purposes of a beneficent legislation. In the House of Commons "sometimes when an answer has been given, further questions are addressed to the Minister on the same subject," apparently with a view to offer an explanation or remove a misconception. In the House of Lords greater latitude is allowed in putting questions (Erskine May, "Parliamentary Practice," page 329). In the House of Lords when a question is put, the member putting it may make a speech in explanation of the question and by way of preface to it. One of the objects which the Government had in view in conferring the right of interpellation was to afford opportunities for clearing up misconceptions with regard to the measures of Government and the conduct of officials. Looking at the matter from this standpoint, it seems to me that the object which the Government had in view would be best served by adopting the practice of



the House of Commons—a practice which has been sanctioned by the wisdom of ages.

DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

Under the Indian Councils Amended Act of 1892, not only have the Councils been partially reconstituted, but their functions have been enlarged—the discussion of the Budget has been allowed, whether it is proposed to levy any new tax or not. This right, however, is to be exercised subject to an important reservation. Members may discuss the Budget—may make any observations they please—but they cannot move any Resolution in respect of any item in the Budget or divide the Council thereupon. This seems to me to be altogether a needless restriction, having regard to the fact that the Government has a standing majority in the Councils. If the non-official members were united to a man, they could not carry any Resolution if the Government was firmly resolved to oppose it. I venture to submit that if there is one class of questions more than another in respect of which the representatives of the people should exercise any control, it is financial questions. No taxation without representation is the theory of modern civilised Government. We do not ask the Government to embody this principle in the administration of the country. We know that politics is a practical art, and it cannot deal with principles in the abstract. Every political principle must be tested by reference to the actual circumstances under which it is sought to apply it; but when, as in this case, the acceptance of our recommendation can lead to no practical inconvenience but on the contrary is calculated still further to extend the immediate objects of the Indian Councils Act of 1892, and to add to the popularity of the administration, we feel that we stand on sure

ground, and that we may appeal with confidence to the Government to adopt it. Englishmen are our teachers. At their feet we have learnt those constitutional principles which have moulded the Governments of civilized worlds, and which we hope will one day be incorporated in the Government of this country. If there is one thing more than another which their constitutional history impresses upon the mind of the reader, it is this : the zealous solicitude which the English people show at every stage of their history to ensure to their representatives, and to them alone, the full and absolute control over the finances of the country. A money bill becomes law when it has passed the House of Commons. The House of Lords has no sort of jurisdiction over it. I find that in the Ceylon Legislative Council there is no bar to a member moving any Resolution on a financial question, provided the previous assent of the Governor has been obtained thereto. A beginning might indeed be made upon these lines. If the Government hesitates to grant to our representatives in Council the right of moving Resolutions on the Budget without some reservation, the concession may be made subject to the restriction to which I have referred, and which obtains in the Ceylon Legislative Council.

#### THE BUDGET DEBATE—A FARCE.

The question of the Budget naturally leads me to consider how our laws are made. A private member may indeed introduce a Bill subject to leave being granted by Government. Practically, however, the work of legislation is left in the hands of the Government. It must be so in this as in all other countries. So far as the local Councils are concerned, if it is proposed to introduce a Bill, it is prepared by the Local Government in the Legislative Department. It is then submitted to the

Government of India, and the sanction of the Government having been obtained, it is introduced into the Council. In the Governor-General's Council before a Bill is introduced it is submitted for the sanction of the Secretary of State. The result is, that whether a Bill is introduced into a Local Legislative Council with the assent of the Government of India, or into the Supreme Legislative Council with the assent of the Secretary of State, the sanction of superior authority in each case operates in the nature of a mandate upon the somewhat susceptible minds of official members. They vote in a solid phalanx. The amendments of non-official members have absolutely no chance. There is the mandate, express or implied. The Bill must be passed as assented to by the Government of India or the Secretary of State. Legislation under these circumstances becomes a foregone conclusion—the debate a mere formal ceremony—some people will call it a farce. (*Hear, hear.*)

#### THE OFFICIAL MANDATE THEORY.

But the theory of a mandate was never so broadly stated as it was last year by His Excellency the Viceroy and some of his official colleagues on the occasion of the debate on the Excise Bill. Sir Henry Brackenbury, the military member, observed with the bluntness of a soldier that in the matter of voting "they were bound to obey orders given by proper and constituted authority." His Excellency the Viceroy would not accord to members absolute freedom "to speak and vote in the Council for the measure they think best. The right must be exercised subject to an important qualification—they must recognise the responsibility under which they exercised their rights in the Council. His Excellency went on to observe that even Members of Parliament are not free to act as they

please, but are distinctly subject to the mandate of their constituents. This exposition of the theory of a mandate from higher authority, to vote not in accordance with the dictates of one's own conscience, but rather in obedience to superior authority, elicited a strong protest in Council from Sir Griffith Evans, Mr. Pherozeshah Mehta and others, and I am sure you, too, will record your protest against a principle which if accepted would be fatal to the independence of non-official Members of Council. Whether or not Members of Parliament act under any mandate received from their constituents is a matter which we need not discuss here. Members of Parliament are well able to take care of themselves and their consciences. The mandate theory is an old theory—it does not appear before us even in a new garb. After the lapse of a century, it is presented to us in the nakedness of its original simplicity. It formed the subject of an emphatic protest from Edmund Burke, one of the greatest names in English politics. His colleague in the representation of Bristol had raised the question, and Burke replied in a letter which has found a permanent place in the political literature of England. I will read an extract from his letter to the Electors of Bristol, which might fittingly be laid before those who take a different view of the subject :—

*Authoritative instructions, mandates issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience—these are things utterly unknown to the laws of the land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenor of our constitution.*

Yet Burke was a Conservative. He called himself a Whig—but he was truly a Conservative statesman—he was a Heaven-appointed Conservative—one made so by the hand of Nature. His sympathies and leanings were

all distinctly towards the Conservative side of questions. In these days he would have taken his place in the front-rank of Conservative leaders, only his conservatism was not prompted by self-interest; it was tempered by philosophy and a love of country, rare among professional politicians. Burke was the founder of modern conservative philosophy. Confronted with the destructive forces of the French Revolution, his whole life was passed in reconciling the conflicting elements of order and progress. Lord Elgin is a Radical and a Home Ruler. It would almost seem that in this matter the Conservatism of the last century was really more sound and progressive than the *Liberalism of the present*. It is remarkable that only a year before this exposition of the mandate theory, a very different exposition had been heard of the same theory in the Council Chamber of the Bengal Legislative Council. It was on the eve of the enlargement of the Council. Popular constituencies were about to be formed. Mandates might be issued by these constituencies upon their representatives. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Sir Charles Elliott took time by the forelock, as he always did when he was in office, and warned would-be-representatives against the contingency of mandates being issued by their constituents. Thus he observed from his place in the Bengal Council on the 25th February, 1893:—

We are now on the eve of an important reconstruction of this Council the details of which are at present unknown. But we are aware that there will be a considerable extension and expansion of the principle of representation, and I think it very important that it should be understood to what extent and of what character the representation ought to be. I do not venture to forecast what orders we may receive from the Secretary of State or from the Government of India on this subject, but I wish most emphatically to record my agreement with what has fallen from the Advocate-General, that, however much a Member of this Council may be a representative of any Corporation, or of any interest, or of any body or

Association existing in these provinces, he will, on his appointment as a Member of this Council, act according to his lights and according to his conscience. His position ought not to be that of a delegate, and he ought not to be called upon to record his vote in accordance with the views of constituents whom he represents, unless he heartily and personally agrees with them.

Whose authority are we to accept, that of the Viceroy or his late Lieutenant? It is seldom that we find Sir Charles Elliott on the popular side. When he is with us, we may be quite sure that we have exceptionally good reasons for thinking that we are in the right.

Somehow or other, Secretaries of State, and before them the Board of Control, have been wedded to this mandate theory. They have claimed this right from time to time. The Duke of Argyle in a despatch, dated the 24th November 1870, maintained that,

the Government of India were mere Executive Officers of the Home Government who had the ultimate power of requiring the Governor-General to introduce a measure and of requiring also all the official Members of the Council, to vote for it.

The theory has, however, been always strenuously resisted by the independent Members of Council, and by none more strenuously than by Sir Barnes Peacock, perhaps the greatest English lawyer who ever set foot on Indian soil. He said :—

He had always understood and he still held, that the office of a Member of Council was a high and honourable one ; but if he believed that the constitution of this Council was such that its members were bound to legislate in any manner that either the Board of Control or the Honourable Court of Directors might order, he should say that instead of being a high and honourable office, it was one which no man who had a regard for his own honour and independence could consent to hold ; for his own part he would state freely and without hesitation that he would rather resign his office than hold it on that tenure . . . He believed that the trust and duty committed to every Member of the Legislative Council was to act according to his own judgment and conscience.

#### INDIA'S FINANCIAL POSITION.

If your Legislative Councils are an important matter

for your consideration, your finances form the backbone of your administration. Tell me, said John Bright in substance, in one of his speeches, what the financial condition of a country is and I will tell you all about its Government and the condition of its people. The financial test is the most crucial. Judged by it our position is truly deplorable. It is no exaggeration to say that the financial position of India is one of ever-recurring deficit, and of ever-increasing debt. I should be sorry to say one word which would convey to the mind of any one an exaggerated notion of the difficulties by which the Government of India is surrounded. Let there be "naught extenuate or aught set down in malice." But I think I am strictly within the limits of truth when I say that, so far as our financial position is concerned, debt and deficit represent the order of the day. Let me ask you to follow me as I rapidly glance over a few facts and figures in connection with the financial history of the sixty years from 1834 to 1894. During this period you have had 34 years of deficit amounting in round numbers to 83 crores of rupees, and 26 years of surplus amounting to 42 crores of rupees, in round numbers, with the net result that you have a net deficit of about 41 crores of rupees, which makes an average of deficits of something over sixty-five lakhs of rupees per year. Our debt kept pace with our deficit. They are twin sisters which march apace. It must be so in the nature of things. An ever-increasing deficit must produce an ever-accumulating debt. During the same period the Public Debt increased from 26 crores to 210 crores; and 42 crores of this amount were incurred within the last ten years. If we are not bankrupts, at any rate, we are on the high road to it. If an ordinary individual found that his expenditure was steadily increasing, that

income was not increasing in the same proportion, that his resources were strained to the utmost, and that his debt was fast accumulating, he would feel that he was perilously near bankruptcy. But I suppose Governments are not like ordinary mortals. They do not participate in the common feelings and the common failings of our ordinary human nature—and hence the optimism of our rulers.

#### INCREASE OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

What is it that has brought the country to its present deplorable financial position? The answer must be that it is in the main the aggressive military policy of the Government. The depreciated rupee has much to answer for; it is responsible for many sins of omission and commission, but it is not wholly nor even mainly chargeable with the present financial embarrassments of the Government. Sir Auckland Colvin in a recent article in the *Nineteenth Century* observes that the increase of Indian expenditure from 1883-84 to 1892-93, amounting to about 11 crores of rupees, was due to three causes, and he regards the military charges as the first and the foremost of these (*vide* page 873, *The Nineteenth Century* for November). In the course of the same article, he observes :—

There can be no improvement in Indian finances so long as Indian revenues are depleted by the claims of frontier extension, or exposed to the risk and requirements of war.

Fall in the exchange and the abnormal activity in the State construction of railways on a gold basis, when the exchange value of silver is rapidly falling, are, in the opinion of Sir Auckland Colvin, the other and less effective cause of this increased expenditure. Sir William Harcourt in the course of a recent debate on Chitral held that the additional military charges were among the elements



which have disorganised Indian finance. Let me quote his words:—

The question of the ability of India to bear a burden of this character is a very serious question. We all know with reference to the expedition to Afghanistan that there was a large addition made some years ago to the Indian Army, and that addition to the Army was among the elements which have led to the financial difficulties of India.

The British Committee of the National Congress took substantially the same view of the matter. In a Note which they circulated they held that it was not exchange so much as the increase in Civil and Military expenditure which was responsible for the financial difficulties of the Government of India. Sir James Westland accused the Committee of having committed "a gigantic blunder." The Committee came back to the attack and showed that their mistake was not a huge blunder, and that it was due to the system of accounts sanctioned by the authority of the Indian Finance Department, over which Sir James Westland presided. They further pointed out that "the expenditure on the Civil and Military Services exhibits the large increase of Rs. 8,54,346 apart from any increase in exchange."

It is not then exchange—it is not some economic monster over which the Government of India has no control and which cannot be disposed of by the closing of the Mints—that is responsible for the present deplorable condition of Indian finance. It is in the main the military policy pursued by the Government which has brought us to our present position. The military charges have steadily increased. At the time of the Indian Mutiny with an army of 240,000 men, the military expenditure of the country came up to 11 crores of rupees. In 1864, with a reduced army the expenditure was 14 crores of rupees. In the meantime the amalgamation scheme

between the Indian Government and the War Office had been carried out—that contract had been entered into which, in the felicitous language of the late Mr. Fawcett, was a contract between a dwarf and a giant, in which of course the dwarf went to the wall. In 1884, with an army of 189,000 men, the expenditure came up to 17 crores of rupees; in 1895-96, it is 20 crores of rupees exclusive of exchange. In March 1885, Sir Auckland Colvin, speaking from his place as Finance Minister, estimated the net cost of the Army (exclusive of exchange) at 150,000,000 of rupees. This amount he considered to be about the normal expenditure in India and in England. If we add another crore of rupees (excluding exchange) for military works, not taking into account special defence works, the net military expenditure may be fixed at 16 crores of rupees. Now within the last 20 years this normal expenditure has been exceeded by more than 50 crores of rupees. Let me give you the rough details :—

		Rs.
Afghan War	...	1,15,00,000
Annexation of Upper Burma	...	40,00,000
Increase in Army (9 full years.)	...	1,35,00,000
Expeditions, Increased Ex-	} ...	2,28,00,000
pediture, Occupation of		
Upper Burma, etc.		
	Rs. ...	<u>5,18,00,000</u>

#### CHITRAL EXPEDITION.

This policy, so disastrous to the financial interests of India, is being followed by our rulers with unabated zeal; and the most recent illustration of it is afforded by the annexation of Chitral. The expedition to Chitral was condemned by the Indian Press with singular unanimity. But whatever justification there might have been for the expedition, there is absolutely none for the permanent

occupation of the country. In the proclamation issued by the Government there was a distinct promise that when the object of the expedition had been attained, the forces would be withdrawn. I quote the exact words of the Proclamation :—

The sole object of the Government of India is to put an end to the present and to prevent any future unlawful aggression on Chitral territory; and as soon as the object has been attained the forces will be withdrawn:

Thus was a solemn declaration made before all India that after the object of the expedition had been attained, which was the relief of the beleaguered garrison and the protection of Chitral against any present and future troubles, the Army would be withdrawn. I must express my unqualified surprise that with this declaration before it, to the faithful observance of which the honour of the Government was pledged, the Government of India with Lord Elgin at its head should have unanimously recommended the occupation of the country. I desire to place the moral consideration in the forefront (*cheers*); that which is morally indefensible cannot be politically expedient. (*Hear, hear.*) Politics divorced from morality is no politics at all (*cheers*); it is political jugglery of the worst description. It is not for one moment to be supposed that the semi-civilized races, who have thus been treated, whose forbearance and neutrality was secured by a promise made to be broken, are insensible to the binding character of a moral obligation. (*Hear, hear.*) They will feel the wrong and the insult; they will brood over the injustice which, in the words of Carlyle, never fails to “revenge itself with compound interest.” (*Hear, hear.*) What explanation has the Government of India to offer in support of its policy? I have not heard of any, except the halting and lame defence that was put forward by the

Prime Minister from his place in Parliament. The annexation was sought to be justified on grounds of moral, if not of physical, strategy. It was said that if the troops were withdrawn and the country was abandoned, it would involve loss of prestige and produce a detrimental effect upon the minds of the tribes. It seems to me, with all deference, that the Prime Minister's moral strategy is very much wide of the mark. Moral strategy inconsistent with moral principles is a very poor sort of strategy. (*Hear, hear.*) If the tribes are human beings—I suppose they are—(*laughter*) with human instincts and feelings, this breach of a solemn promise will have a disastrous effect upon their minds. It will have a far more detrimental effect than what might be supposed to be produced by the alleged loss of prestige, consequent upon the withdrawal of the troops. It will alienate their sympathies and convert them into discontented allies or open foes. If this be one of the objects which is sought to be attained by the new code of moral strategy, I have nothing to say to it.

#### CHITRAL EXPEDITION IN ITS FINANCIAL ASPECT.

But what about the financial aspect of the question. That is the consideration which presses most upon us. From this point of view its gravity cannot be over-estimated. When the expedition started last summer, it was stated, confidently stated, that 15 lakhs of rupees would suffice to cover all expenses. Wise men shook their heads. But all doubts and misgivings gave way for the time at least before the positive assurances of the Government and its organs in the Press. Have these confident predictions been fulfilled? How many fifteen lakhs of rupees have been spent upon the expedition, it is difficult to say; but this ludicrously low estimate serves to indicate the want of foresight which is sometimes displayed by the Financial

Department in dealing with estimates. In India, the public memory is notoriously short; but we have not yet quite forgotten the story of the missing four crores which had disappeared amid the mountain-passes of Afghanistan, and which the Financial Department was at its wit's end to discover. The estimate was fixed at 15 lakhs of rupees, but the expedition, it is believed, has cost nearly two crores of rupees; and the further question occurs—will not the occupation of Chitral involve an addition to the Indian Army and to the already excessive military expenditure of the Empire? Mr. Balfour, in the course of the discussion which took place in the House of Commons in September last, gave the assurance that there would be “no addition to the Indian Army.”

The Indian Government inform us categorically, he went on to observe, that the existing body of troops in India would suffice to meet every necessity. The garrison force in Gilgit will be diminished; there will be re-distribution of troops, but no addition will be required.

The obvious retort, to which the explanation is liable, is that if Chitral could be occupied without any addition to the forces, the Indian Government had at its disposal an overgrown Army in excess of the requirements of the country. However that may be, can we rely upon this assurance? Can we rely upon the ever-shifting phases of Central Asian politics? We will not say that the Government will deliberately depart from an assurance thus solemnly given, but the Government may be driven into a position by reason of the occupation of Chitral, which may compel the Government to add to the Army and the Military expenditure of the Empire. It is impossible to say what may or may not happen in Central Asian politics. A forward movement on the frontier involves the Government in indefinite responsibilities

which it is impossible to foresee and calculate upon with confidence. Thus observed Lord Lawrence many, many years ago :—

We foresee no limits to the expenditure which such a move (a forward move) might require; and we protest against the necessity of having to impose additional taxation on the people of India, who are unwilling, as it is, to bear such pressure for measures which they can both understand and appreciate. . . . our true policy, our strongest security will be found to be in the contentment, if not in the attachment, of the masses . . . in husbanding our finances and consolidating and multiplying our resources.

#### THE FRONTIER POLICY.

Times without number have we in Congress assembled under the guidance of my esteemed friend, Mr. Wacha, whose knowledge of details is only surpassed by his zeal for the public good, protested against the extravagant military expenditure of the Government. The Government is in quest of a scientific frontier, by which we understand a frontier which is better capable of being defended against a foreign invader than a frontier which is not scientific. But, as Colonel Hanna has pointed out in a little book on frontier policy which I would like to recommend to you, that which is scientific is fixed and definite. What is scientific to-day cannot be unscientific to-morrow. A scientific frontier cannot constantly be receding in the distance like the *ignis fatuus*, as you advance towards it. Let me tell the Government of India, in your name, that the true scientific frontier against Russian invasion does not lie in some remote inaccessible mountain which has yet to be discovered, nor is it to be found in the House of Commons as some one said; but it lies deep in the grateful hearts of a loyal and contented people. If India is loyal and grateful, and is united by a common sentiment of devotion to British rule; resolved to die in its defence, India can raise a barrier which will defy

the efforts of the most powerful foreign invader who yet has desecrated our territories. Where have you heard of a foreign invader being triumphant against the efforts of a united people, and of a people too like ourselves, as countless as the stars of heaven, and as multitudinous as the sands of the sea. I have heard of this Russian invasion since the days of my childhood. The Russians have not come. They never will come; and if they do come, and if India is loyal and united, then they will find behind the serried ranks of one of the finest armies in the world the multitudinous races and peoples of India united as one man ready to die for the Sovereign and in the defence of their hearths and homes. But I am bound to add that the Government is alienating the sympathies of the people by wasting their resources upon these frontier wars. The commonest domestic improvements are starved, the most urgent domestic reforms are postponed through want of funds. But when it comes to a question of granting a subsidy to some frontier chief, or embarking upon some frontier expedition, or entertaining the son of a Prince who has been useful to us in frontier politics, then our Government is as rich as the richest Government in the world.

But we are in excellent company in condemning the forward policy which is now in the ascendant in the Councils of the Government. Some of the most distinguished statesmen who have adorned the annals of modern Indian history, one of them intimately acquainted with frontier affairs, to whose foresight the salvation of the Empire was due at a critical time, have repeatedly warned the Government to confine their attention to within their own dominions, and to devote themselves to the improvement of the condition of the people. This was what Lord Lawrence wrote :—

Taking every view, then, of this great question—the progress of Russia in Central Asia, the effect it will, in course of time, have upon India, the arrangements which we should have to make meet it—I am firmly of opinion that our proper course is not to advance our troops beyond our present border, nor to send English Officers into the different States of Central Asia, but to put our own house in order by giving the people of India the best government in our power, by conciliating, as far as practicable, all classes, and by consolidating our resources.

Lord Lawrence's advice was "to put our house in order by giving the people of India the best form of Government in our power, and by conciliating all classes." The same views, if not expressed in the same words, were shared by a host of other eminent statesmen and soldiers, among whom I may mention the names of Lord Canning, Lord Mayo, Lord Northbrook, Sir Henry Norman, Sir Henry Durand, Sir William Muir, and last though not least, Sir William Mansfield, afterwards Lord Sandhurst, the father of your excellent Governor.

#### EXPENSIVE MILITARY PROGRAMME.

Are these ideas to be regarded as old-fashioned and antiquated? Have circumstances so changed as to call for a complete change, and not only a change but an absolute reversal of the policy of masterly inactivity associated with the honoured name of Lord Lawrence? I do not think so. The circumstances connected with the border politics have perhaps undergone some change, but not such as to require the adoption of a spirited frontier policy, leading to a sensible addition to the Indian Army, and to numerous petty little wars which have completely disorganised our finances. The Simla Army Commission which submitted its Report in 1884 recognized this change, but nevertheless did not recommend any addition to the Indian Army. The Commission considered the Army, such as it then was, sufficient for all purposes of



offensive and defensive operations. What is it, then, that has brought about this change—this radical and fundamental change in the policy of our rulers? It was the Penjdeh incident which upset the equanimity of the Government, and plunged the country into an expensive Military programme, which has brought the Indian Government to the verge of bankruptcy. It was immediately followed by the addition of thirty-thousand men to the Army. As Sir Auckland Colvin has observed, what were our rulers to do with such a fine and splendidly organised Army if they did not occasionally indulge in the luxury of a frontier expedition, at the expense of the Indian taxpayer? In all conscience the temptation is great; and the late Sir William Mansfield, afterwards Lord Sandhurst, went so far as to observe that the real cause of the agitation set on foot in his time for an aggressive policy “was what might be styled Brevet Mania or K. C. B. Mania rather than Russophobia.”

#### INDIAN FINANCE AND THE HOME CHARGES.

In dealing with the question of Indian Finance, the Home Charges loom largely in view. They have gone on steadily increasing. In ten years they have risen over 30 per cent. In 1882, they were Rs. 17,366,000. In 1892, they were Rs. 22,911,000. They have been the subject of adverse comment by successive Viceroy. Charges are thrown upon us which should be borne by the Home Treasury, or in respect of which there should be an adjustment between the Home and the Indian Treasuries. Charges are thrown upon us, which, or charges similar to which, in the case of the free and independent Colonies, are borne by the Home Government. We paid £500,000 for the construction of the India Office in London. The Home Government paid £100,000 for the construction of

the Colonial Office in London. Can anybody tell me why the Colonial Office cost £100,000 in the construction and the India Office £500,000? Did it make any difference that the one was paid for out of our money and the other out of the money of the English taxpayer, who can look after his purse and can control the public expenditure? But let us proceed. We pay all the charges of the India Office in London amounting to £230,000 a year. The Home Government pays £41,000 for the Colonial Office in London. We pay £12,500 a year for the maintenance of the Chinese Legation, and £7,000 a year for the Persian Legation. The cost of the Residency in Turkish Arabia and of the Consulate in Bagdad, amounting to Rs. 1,72,360, is entirely paid from the Indian revenues, as if England in her Imperial relations was in no way interested in their maintenance. Is not Bagdad one of the headquarters of Central Asian politics—the focus of intrigue in that part of the world? And is not England interested in the maintenance of the Consulate there?

The economic aspect of this question is not to be overlooked. England does not levy any direct tribute upon India. But these Home Charges operate in the nature of a tribute. As Sir George Wingate very properly observed many many years ago in connection with these Home Charges :—

The taxes spent in the country from which they are raised are totally different in their effect from taxes raised in one country and spent in another. . . . In this case, they constitute no mere transfer of one portion of the national income from one set of citizens to another, but are an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount drawn from the taxed country.

The Home Charges constitute a serious drain, and add to the ever-increasing poverty of the country. But it is no use repeating the old complaint. We must be prepared to formulate definite proposals in this connection for the

consideration of Government. I cordially endorse the view which has been put forward by a writer in the columns of *India*, to the effect that the Home Government should bear a portion of the Home Charges. I trust the Royal Commission now enquiring into Indian Expenditure will see its way to make a recommendation to that effect. This would be nothing but fair and just, and what is due to the interests of India.

INDIA'S SHARE IN FIGHTING FOR THE EMPIRE.

We have fought the wars of England in the past with our blood and treasure. In the Abyssinian Expedition, it was we who fought and bled ; it was the Indian Government which spent its treasure and sacrificed the lives of its brave soldiers. It was your Bombay troops who, in the somewhat pompous language of Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, "planted the standard of St. George on the heights of Rasselas." In the Afghan wars in Lord Lytton's time India bore the entire expense, save and except a sum of five millions sterling, contributed by Mr. Gladstone's Government.

In Central Asian Policy, a policy in which India alone is interested ? Does it not affect the Imperial relations of England as a great Asiatic, and even as a great European, power ? It is true we are interested—largely interested—but we are not solely and exclusively interested. Why, then, should we alone be required to pay towards the promotion of schemes and projects, of wars and negotiations, of commissions and entertainments to Royal Princes which are due to the requirements of Imperial policy ? When many years ago, I think it was in the sixties, the Sultan of Turkey was entertained at our expense, the Government stated in reply to a question that the money had been paid out of the Indian Treasury, as it was believed

that the entertainment would be gratifying to the Mahomedan subjects of Her Majesty. Is it proposed to justify on the same principle the entire burden of the Nasarulla entertainment being thrown on the Indian Exchequer? No explanation has been given on this score, though Sir William Wedderburn pressed hard to bring about a division of the expenditure between the two countries. Sirdar Nasarulla went to England as the guest of the English people—and at the invitation of the British Government. If there was any policy underlying this personal matter, it was one solely prompted by the exigencies of England's Imperial position. If so, was it just and generous for a great and rich Government like that of England to saddle a poverty-stricken country like India with the entire cost of the entertainment? It is a small matter. But if in a paltry affair like this, there is an utter absence of the spirit of fairness and of a desire to do strict justice in dealing with the finances of an unrepresented dependency, what may we not expect in matters of greater moment? (*Cheers.*)

#### APPORTIONMENT OF HOME CHARGES.

The apportionment of the Home Charges between England and India would not only be just, but is desirable from another point of view. At the present moment nobody seems to be responsible for Indian finance. In the felicitous language of the late Mr. George Yule, whose memory this Congress holds in high honour, India was a trust committed by Providence to the care of Parliament. Parliament has thrown the trust back upon Providence. In the Indian Legislative Council the debate on the Budget is more or less academic in its character. The members cannot move any resolution in respect of it. In Parliament the Indian Budget is introduced at the fag-end of the session, and is discussed before empty benches. No

English Minister would dare to deal with the English Budget in this way; but if the English Treasury made a contribution to the Home Charges, we may be quite sure the British taxpayer would insist upon a scrutiny as to how the money was spent, and the British Member of Parliament, now usually so apathetic with regard to Indian affairs, would be responsive to the call of his constituents. The real and genuine, and not the mere nominal, control of the English Parliament would thus be secured. This would be an advantage worth having, for we have unstinted confidence in the justice and generosity of the British people and their representatives in Parliament.

#### POVERTY OF INDIA.

The poverty of the masses of our countrymen has been the theme of endless discussion here and elsewhere. We know what the views of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji are. He holds that the average income per head of the population in India is Rs. 20, against Lord Cromer's estimate of Rs. 27 a year. Whether it is Rs. 20 or Rs. 27 per head makes no difference. It is striking evidence of the deplorable poverty of the masses of our population. If you compare the economic condition of the masses of our people with that of more fortunately situated countries in Europe, this truth forces itself upon our attention with painful impressiveness. Lord Cromer is my authority. Lord Cromer, then Sir Evelyn Baring, gave some figures in 1882, which throw a lurid light upon the economic condition of our people. The average income of the population per head in Great Britain was estimated by him at £33 a year; in France it was £23; in Turkey, which is the poorest country in Europe, it was £4. Mulhal gives the income per head of the Russian population at £9.

Upon this income of £33, the English taxpayer pays a tax of £2-12 per head ; the Indian taxpayer upon his income of Rs.20 or Rs.27 a year, pays a tax of 2s. 6d. per head. The English taxpayer thus pays a tax of 7 per cent. upon his income of £33, while the Indian taxpayer pays a tax of 5 per cent. upon his income of Rs. 27. It will be readily admitted that five per cent. upon an income of Rs. 27 is a much more serious matter—involves a much heavier sacrifice—than 7 per cent. upon an income of £33. I ask you to bear in mind one little consideration. The average calculation is made by dividing the whole income of the community, whatever it may be, among the heads of population. But it is, after all, an average. There must be a large number whose income is below the average, as there must be a large number whose income is above it. I ask you for one moment to consider what must be the condition in life of that large number of people whose income is below Rs.27 a year ?

It is no wonder, then, that 40 millions of our people live upon one meal a day, as stated by Sir William Hunter, or that we have those periodical famines which decimate thousands and hundreds of thousands of our population. Cuvier has remarked that famines are impossible in this age. So they are in European countries, but not in this hapless land of ours, which a great orator in the last century described as “the garden of Asia, the granary of the East.” We must all note with thankfulness that an influential journal like the *Pioneer*, supposed to be the exponent of official opinion, takes the popular view of the matter. That journal freely admits :—

That the masses in India are poor, very poor ; that our administration is an expensive one ; that money is often wasted in enterprises like the Chitral imbroglio, and that, in various direc

tions without administrative injury, economy and retrenchment might be enforced.

#### INDIAN POVERTY AND THE SALVATION ARMY.

I am glad to find that the Salvation Army have had their attention prominently called to the poverty-stricken condition of our masses. With an all-comprehensive philanthropy which does honour to their Christianity, they have not forgotten the Indian poor. Their scheme for the reclamation of the submerged tenth will include our submerged fifth. Their scheme for Indian peasant-settlements is well worth consideration; and, whatever we may think of its details, our sympathies must go forth on behalf of a project, so noble, so generous, so full of the spirit of true Christian charity.

#### IMPORT DUTIES ON COTTON GOODS.

Upon this miserable income of Rs. 27 a year, the native of India has to pay a tax of 5 per cent., while the Englishman with an average annual income of £33, pays only a tax of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The furthest limits of taxation have indeed been reached. The import duties on cotton goods, which had been abolished in Lord Ripon's time, had to be re-imposed to meet the exigencies of an impecunious Government. This was an extreme step which no Government anxious to secure the votes of Lancashire would take except under a sense of supreme and imperious necessity. That the duties should have been re-imposed is evidence of the financial crisis to which the country has been reduced. The duties are not meant to be protective; they never were protective in their character. They were levied for revenue purposes; they are now levied for revenue. There is not a more earnest advocate of Free Trade than Mr. Gladstone. He was a Member of the Government of Sir Robert Peel when the principles of Free Trade were for

the first time recognised by an English Government in the administrative measures of the country. Mr. Gladstone strongly opposed the partial repeal of these duties in Lord Lytton's time, on the ground that if they militated against the principles of Free Trade, the financial condition of the Government was an essential element in the consideration. From his place in Parliament, he thus denounced the repeal of the duties :

What an invidious, almost odious, picture of inequality we exhibit to the millions of India. The Free Trade doctrines that we hold so dear, that we apply them against the feelings of the Indian people in their utmost rigour and without a grain of mercy, disappear in a moment when it is a question of dealing with those whose interest and opinions we cannot lightly tamper with, namely, the free colonists of the empire. The Governor-General, says he, cannot see that financial difficulty can in any way be pleaded as a reason against what he calls fiscal reform. If that be a true principle of Government, it has been discovered for the first time by the present Viceroy. There has not been a Free-Trade Government in this or any country which has not freely admitted that the state of the revenue is an essential element in the consideration of the application even of the best principle of Free Trade.

I am free to admit there is some protection involved in allowing Indian yarn only to be taxed above 20's count, and imposing a duty upon all descriptions of cloth and yarn imported from the United Kingdom. But the measure of this protection is infinitesimal when you bear in mind that the duty on cloth and yarn imported of 20's count and under, according to the estimate of Mr. O'Connor, is about four lakhs out of a total of about a crore-and-a-half. Manchester imports but little of these coarser fabrics; there is little or no competition here; nobody perhaps would object if these four lakhs of rupees were abandoned by exempting from duty all imported yarn and cloth of 20's count and under. For myself I would prefer a remission of the salt duties to this remission of the import duties.



But Manchester has another grievance. While only Indian yarns of the finer kind are taxed, all cotton fabrics of the finer sort imported from England are taxed. The Government charges more upon the manufactured goods than upon the yarns. To that extent, the finer cloths which are imported are handicapped against Indian goods of the same class. To that extent there is protection. This may be easily remedied by fixing a lower duty upon these manufactured goods imported from England, say a duty of four per cent. instead of five per cent.

What the ultimate fate of these duties will be, it is difficult to say. Manchester is vigorously agitating for their repeal. The present Secretary of State, Lord George Hamilton, had indeed strongly denounced the imposition of these duties from his place in Parliament, while he was a Member of the Opposition. The supporters of the duties were politely told by his Lordship that they were so many "shrieking units" of the Indian community who chiefly lived in the metropolitan towns of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay—I am quoting from memory, I cannot be sure whether Poona was included—and who had learnt the methods of Western agitation, but that their opinion was in no way to be confounded with the opinion of the great body of the people. By a strange irony of fate, his Lordship has apparently joined hands with "the shrieking units," whom he had not long ago so vigorously denounced. It is very evident from his recent utterances that, while, as he tells us, he firmly adheres to his former views, he does not see his way to gratify the wishes of Lancashire. He is waiting for the Despatches of the Government of India on the subject. The elections are over. There is a long time yet to think of the next elections, and in the meanti, many things may happen. If Manchester has a grievance

and there can be no doubt that she feels she has a grievance, let her agitate for financial justice to India, and she will command the sympathies of educated India.

#### EXCHANGE COMPENSATION ALLOWANCE.

From one point of view, Manchester has indeed a grievance. The duties are levied, and yet Exchange Compensation Allowance is granted to the European officials of the Government.—Practically the proceeds of the duties are paid as compensation allowance. The proceeds of the duties come up to about a crore-and-a-half a year. The disbursements under Exchange Compensation Allowance come up to about the same sum. Abolish the Exchange Compensation allowance, and you need not impose the duties. As between the two, I would rather abolish the duties than grant Exchange Compensation Allowance. If the allowance was made upon actual remittances sent to England, or if it was granted only to such officials as had joined the service before the rapid fall in the rupee had set in, there might be some show of a justification. As it is, it constitutes an invidious and irritating distinction between the European and the non-European officials of the Government. According to the most recent explanation given by Lord George Hamilton, the object of the Exchange Compensation Allowance is to afford European servants of the Government the opportunity of making remittances Home and providing themselves with English-made articles. Whether they do so or not is quite another matter.

Exchange Compensation Allowance seems to me to be useless for the purpose for which it is granted. It is not a sufficient inducement to the senior officers to continue after their term of service has been completed; while the popularity of the Indian Civil Service among the educated

youth in England, notwithstanding the rapid fall in the Exchange, may be judged from the fact that three English candidates, who had recently qualified themselves both for the Home as well as the Indian Civil Service, preferred the latter.

The grant of Exchange Compensation Allowance to the highly-paid officers of the Government lays our rulers open to a serious complaint. It is said that these high officers of Government, who are the masters of the situation, have quietly added to their own salaries, while the humbler classes of public servants who can hardly make two ends meet, who have to eke out their miserable pittance by resort to practices which will not bear the test of scrutiny, but which dire necessity imposes upon them, still continue to draw salaries which were fixed many, many years ago. In Bengal, a Salaries Commission, consisting of some of the highest officials in the land, was appointed in 1885. They submitted their Report in 1886. They recommended, having regard to the rise in the price of food-grains, that an increase of at least 75 per cent. should be made to the pay of the ministerial servants of the Government. The recommendation has not been given effect to: it remains a dead letter. The question was prominently brought to the notice of the Lieutenant-Governor at the meeting of the Local Council when the Budget was discussed in April last. His Honour expressed sympathy with the proposal, but I am not aware that the matter has gone beyond the stage of a mere expression of a pious hope that some day, under better auspices and in more favourable times, the evil might be remedied. In the meantime my information is that the peons of the various Government offices, drawing wages varying from seven to ten rupees a month, and who had applied for in-

crease, were told by Sir Charles Elliot that he could not grant their request, because forsooth, in August and September last, the price of common rice had gone down, and more than 12 seers of rice could be had for the rupee.

#### INDIAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Ours is a political organization; but we cannot overlook considerations which affect the development of our industries and our manufactures. The economic condition of a people has an intimate bearing upon their political advancement. Looking at the matter from this point of view, we feel that it is our duty to safeguard our industries. Their conservation is a matter of grave national importance. We have our cotton industry in Bombay, the jute industry in Bengal, the tea industry in Assam, and the coal and iron industries in Central and Southern India. Factory Acts which have hitherto been understood to be framed for the protection of operatives are now sought to be used for the avowed object of restricting and raising the cost of production.

"Pressure," I understand, "is now to be put upon the Secretary of State to ignore the interests of the people of this country and to order a Factory Act for India, which will prevent our mills from competing with those in England."

Lancashire people engaged in cotton industry have attacked the cotton industry in India, insisting on a stricter Factory Act and shorter working hours, quite oblivious of the hardships this would obviously entail on the people of India generally, and overlooking the fact that Japan is already a serious rival to India as well as England. Then the jute manufacturing industry has been threatened by the jute manufacturers in Dundee, on the plea that their trade is suffering from the competition of the Indian mills. They too seem to forget the important factor that there are many jute mills on

the continent of Europe and go straight for the Indian mills, because they are under the British Government.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES OF ENQUIRY INTO

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

I now pass on to consider an important question which must soon engage a large share of public attention. You are aware that under the East India Company, Parliamentary Committees used to be appointed every 20 years on the eve of the renewal of the Charter of the Company. Some of the most beneficent chapters in Indian history are associated with the labours of these Committees. The investigations of the Parliamentary Committee of 1833 led to the enactment of the Charter Act of that year. One of the happy results of the labours of the Parliamentary Committee of 1853 was the throwing open to general competition of the appointments in the Indian Civil Service. Apart from these direct results, these periodical enquiries exercised a healthy influence over the course of Indian administration. Indian officials after all are men, and when they knew that after every 20 years there would be this examination, this scrutiny into Indian affairs, they naturally were careful as to the policy they pursued and as to the details of their administration. Ever since 1853—ever since India has passed under the Government of the Crown—there has not been a Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry into Indian affairs, with the exception of the abortive Committee that was appointed when Lord Randolph Churchill was Secretary of State. The Committee collapsed almost as soon as it was appointed, owing to the dissolution of Parliament.

THE BRITISH CONGRESS COMMITTEE.

It will be my duty later on to refer to the labours of

the British Committee and of the Indian Parliamentary Committee. But, at this stage, I may be permitted to observe that the appointment of the Royal Commission was mainly due to their incessant and devoted efforts, and where all so richly deserve our thanks, it would be invidious to mention names. But if I am permitted to refer to any one who in a special degree is entitled to our acknowledgments, it is Sir William Wedderburn, the President of the British Committee. Sir William Wedderburn is well known in this Presidency, but his is a name which is held in universal honour throughout India as that of a fearless, self-sacrificing, and devoted champion of Indian interests. The one idea upon which he has been ceaselessly harping, ever since his retirement from official life made it possible for him to devote himself, according to the natural impulses of his generous heart, to the service of the land of his adoption, was the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into Indian expenditure. It formed the theme of his eloquent address from the Presidential chair of the Congress held at Bombay; and at last success has crowned his efforts and those of his colleagues.

#### THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

The Commission is now sitting. We regret the Commission has decided to carry on its deliberations with closed doors. We believe publicity would have materially helped the Commission in the important work in which it is engaged. "Light, kindly light," is what we need amid "the encircling gloom" that surrounds us. None the less we expect great results from the labours of the Commission. We are confident the labours of the Commission will mark an epoch in the history of our financial relations with England. Sir Henry Fowler had indeed observed, when the Commission was appointed, that no question of

policy would lie within the competence of the Commission. The terms, however, of the appointment do not seem to me to exclude the consideration of the policy which governs the administration of the Civil and Military expenditure of the Empire. The terms are wide enough to include such a consideration. The Commission is appointed to enquire into :

(a) "the administration and management of the Military, and enquiry into Civil expenditure incurred under the authority of the Secretary of State for India in Council or of the Government of India;" and (b) "the apportionment of charges between the Governments of the United Kingdom and India for purposes in which both are interested."

#### CIVIL AND MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

The administration and management of the Civil and Military expenditure of the Empire necessarily includes considerations of policy. To hold otherwise would be to unduly limit the scope of the enquiry, and to restrict it to mere matters of account-keeping. As the *Times* truly says :

Any curtailment of the scope of the Royal Commission's enquiry which might debar reasonable men from coming to a conclusion on these questions would be received with disappointment in England and with deep dissatisfaction throughout India.

#### THE HOME CHARGES.

The second part of the enquiry is, if possible, of still greater importance. It intimately affects the Home Charges. Our complaint is, that the Indian Exchequer is saddled with charges which should not be thrown upon us. It is not a complaint uttered by irresponsible critics in the Press, but it is a complaint to which statesmen of the eminence of Duke of Argyle, Lord Northbrook, and others have lent the weight of their names. I have no right to anticipate the decision of the Commission, but I am sure I re-echo your sentiments when I say that the people of India appeal to the Commission for justice, for that

financial justice, for which they have cried so often, but have hitherto cried in vain.

We too have a duty to perform in this connection. Three Members of the British Committee are on the Commission. We know how nobly they are doing their work. But our side of the case must be represented, and adequately represented. The Commission must be placed in touch with popular opinion in India. In this matter I am happy to be able to say that we are in complete accord with our Anglo-Indian fellow-subjects. In the whole compass of the political literature of the last ten years, there is nothing more searching, yet more discriminating, than Sir Griffith Evans' criticism on the Home Charges. Every Association in the country ought to send representations to the Commission, bearing on the question of Indian expenditure, and on the adjustment of charges between India and England. There should go forth from us an unequivocal and emphatic demonstration, against the present system by which England throws upon India charges incidental to her Imperial responsibility, and which in equity ought to be shared between the two countries, with some reference not only to the mutual benefits derived, but also to the capacity of each country to bear the burden.

#### WIDER EMPLOYMENT OF INDIANS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

The question of the wider employment of our countrymen in the public service is, to my mind, more or less a financial problem. It is intimately connected with the question of the poverty of the people. That is the view of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji; that was the view of the late Mr. Robert Knight, than whom there was not an abler financial expert or a more ardent friend of the people of India. The considerations bearing upon this point are obvious. The more of the foreign element there is in the public service,



with the high pay which must necessarily be given to them for service in a foreign country, the more you widen and deepen that channel by which the wealth of the country flows out—the greater is the impetus you give to that drain which is going on and which has gone on for the last hundred years and more, and which is more or less incidental to the present state of things. A part of the salaries of these highly-paid officials must be spent out of the country, for the support of their wives and children, while they are yet in the service; and when they have retired, the whole of their pensions, with exceptions which hardly call for notice, must be spent abroad. This means the loss of this portion of the national wealth which is absolutely indefensible, if substantially service of the same quality could be obtained by employing the children of the soil. The employment of a foreign element in the public service of a country, with the prospect of the salaries of these public servants leaving the country, is morally wrong, economically disastrous, and politically inexpedient, unless it is evident that the gain in other respects outweighs the financial loss, or in the end averts greater financial loss, than what is incidental to the employment of the foreign agency. (*Hear, hear.*)

#### BRITISH CAPITAL AND INDIA'S RESOURCES.

We fully recognize the fact that British capital has been sunk in the development of the resources of the country. We are grateful to British capitalists for the boon. Their enterprise has afforded us great advantages: it has given an impetus to trade and commerce: it has facilitated intercourse between the most distant parts of the empire: has annihilated time and space. But in regard to the great railway undertakings, to which I chiefly refer, the capital is English, mostly in gold, which adds to the un-

favourable exchange, the higher employees are English, the bulk of the profits goes to England. The drain continues, though undoubtedly the resources of the country being developed, it is better able to bear the strain.

#### SOLEMN PROMISES OF THE SOVEREIGN.

In asking for the wider employment of our countrymen in the public service, we not only take our stand upon the solemn promises of our Sovereign, which we cherish with the most affectionate ardour, but we rely upon high consideration of expediency. We are interested in the solvency of the Empire—in the financial stability of the Government; for with it are bound up the happiness and prosperity of our people. Therefore it is that we make this demand. The financial consideration runs through it all.

#### POVERTY OF INDIA.

Abject, deplorable poverty is the prolific parent of public disorders. A people groaning under an intolerable load of poverty, with whom existence is a burden, have no interest in the maintenance of the public tranquillity; there is no project, however wild or reckless or inconsistent with the public interests, which in their desperation they might not adopt. I need not quote familiar instances in the history of the world. Oriental nature is not materially different from human nature in other parts of the world.

#### TENSION BETWEEN HINDUS AND MAHOMEDANS.

We all deplore the recent disturbances between Hindus and Mahomedans. We would give worlds to avert them. They throw back the cause of political advancement. But how rare is it that we find respectable people mixed up in these disturbances. People who have anything to lose will not expose themselves to the risk. Those who have nothing to lose, with whom existence is one long incessant struggle, would dare all things and do all things.

A people steeped in poverty represents a political danger, the magnitude of which it is difficult to exaggerate.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE QUESTION.

How does this public service question stand? The Resolution of the House of Commons of the 2nd June, 1893, in favour of Simultaneous Examinations, stands there in the journals of the House. It has not been cancelled. Nor has it been given effect to. What has happened since we met last? A number of petitions has been presented to the House in support of the Resolution to which I have referred, but not as many as one might have wished or hoped for, having regard to the importance of the question and the magnitude of our interests therein. I am bound to say that we have not done our duty in this matter. I feel called upon to repeat the appeal I made last year that we should go on presenting petitions to the House of Commons till we get what we want. Let us convince the British public that we are in earnest about this matter, and I am confident that justice will be done to us. It is no use recording a Resolution here once a year, and then going to sleep over it for the rest of the twelve months.

#### SIMULTANEOUS EXAMINATIONS IN ENGLAND AND INDIA.

Never did the case for Simultaneous Examinations receive a more striking measure of support than from the results of the open Competitive Examination for 1895. There were sixty-six vacancies. There were several Indian candidates. But only one passed, Mr. Shaik Ashgar Ali of the Punjab. In your name I desire to congratulate this gentleman, chiefly because he is a Mahomedan and a native of the Punjab. I should like to put it to the staunchest opponent of Simultaneous Examinations to say if the success of this solitary native

of India represents justice—adequate justice to India. The *Pioneer* newspaper, referring to this year's Final Examination, remarked that, having regard to the results, the case for Simultaneous Examinations must now be considered to be hopeless. What are the results which are supposed to justify this inference? A Mahomedan gentleman was at the top of the list at the Final Examination, and three other Indian candidates occupied very high places. But in considering the results of the Final Examination in their bearing upon the question of Simultaneous Examinations, we must also take into account the results of the Open Competitive Examination for the same year; and if we do so, we are forced to the conclusion that they accentuate the necessity for holding Simultaneous Examinations, both as a matter of justice to India, and with a view to ensure the efficiency of the Service.

I desire to put this question of the efficiency of the Civil Service in the foreground. I am distinctly of opinion that Simultaneous Examinations would add to its efficiency and the results of the recent Open Competitive Examination certainly points to that conclusion. Look at the disparity of marks between the successful candidates at the top and those at the bottom of the list, say, between the first ten and the last ten candidates. As regards the first ten candidates, the marks vary from 2,125 to 3,738; as regards the last ten, the marks vary from 1,493 to 1,587. If these marks are to be regarded as any test or merit, it must be admitted that there was a great and unusual disparity in respect of merit, between the men at the top and the men at the bottom. If a selection could have been made from a wider field, if the examination was held in India as well as in England, it is reasonable to infer

that there would have been some chance of this disparity being removed, and perhaps a better class of candidates selected in the place of those occupying the places at the bottom of the list. It is impossible to resist this conclusion, and to that extent it is impossible to shut our eyes to that other conclusion to which it points, that Simultaneous Examinations are calculated to add to the efficiency of the Service, by widening the field of selection. I regard it as a *sine qua non* that the selected candidates should be required to complete their period of probation in England.

One word more before I leave the question of Simultaneous Examinations. One of the objections raised was that if Simultaneous Examinations were granted, it would involve unfairness to the martial races: the Mahomedans and the Sikhs would have no chance. The results of this and last year's Examinations afford a complete contradiction to this view of the matter. The only successful Indian candidate at the Open Competitive Examination for 1895, was a Mahomedan gentleman; among the successful candidates for 1894 was a Sikh gentleman; and last, but not least, the candidate who heads the list of passed probationers at the Final Examination for this year is a Mahomedan. Our Mahomedan fellow-countrymen are rapidly coming to the forefront, and I think I express the sense of this Congress when I say that we all await with pleasure the advent of that day when in full association with Hindus and others in their intellectual activities, they will stand shoulder to shoulder with them in that political struggle which will only end when Hindus and Mahomedans, and Parsis and Sikhs, all races and all creeds in India, will have won for themselves the full rights of British citizenship.

You will remember that the Resolution of the House of Commons did not concern the Covenanted Civil Service alone. It referred to all Civil Services, and it affirmed the principle of Simultaneous Examinations in regard to them all. In Bengal, a qualified sort of Competitive Examination is held for selection to the Office of Assistant and District Superintendents. A similar Examination is held in London. The Examinations are not held simultaneously. They are not held at the same time ; nor are the same papers set. That is not, however, what we complain of. We have a much more serious grievance when you consider the matter from another point of view. Natives of India are excluded from these Examinations. They are not allowed to compete. They are to be promoted to the office of Assistant and District Superintendents of Police from among the rank of Inspectors.

#### REPORT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.

I have carefully read the Report of the Public Service Commission. There is absolutely nothing in the recommendations of the Public Service Commission to justify this exclusion. The Commission recommend (*vide* page 121 of their Report) "limited competition amongst candidates selected in England," and similar "competition amongst candidates selected in India." They further say that "endeavours should be made to introduce a reasonable proportion of native officers in the higher ranks of the Police." The grievance to which I refer has formed the subject of representations to the Government of Bengal and the Government of India, but so far without any result.

The Government seems to be of opinion that racial distinctions imply moral distinctions, distinctions of character, which involve the possession of one set of

moral qualities rather than another. With the express declaration of the Charter Act of 1833, which lays down that :

No native of the said territories, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be excluded from any office under the said Company.

With the gracious message of the Queen's Proclamation still ringing in our ears—let me repeat those noble words :

Our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely admitted to all offices the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, their ability, and their integrity duly to discharge.

With this express provision in the Charter Act and with the gracious assurance of our Sovereign—it is too late in the day to fall back upon mere racial considerations. Racial qualifications are not moral qualifications. The Competitive Examination is a better test of moral qualifications than the mere accident of race. It must be so in the nature of things ; for what inequalities of temper, of character and disposition, do we not observe among members of the same race ? This question was thoroughly gone into by the Committee that was appointed with Lord Macaulay at its head, on the eve of the creation of the system of Open Competitive Examinations for appointments to the Indian Civil Service. The Committee submitted its Report, in 1854, to Sir Charles Wood, and in that Report the Committee thus observed :—

Early superiority in science and literature generally indicates the existence of some qualities which are securities against vice, industry, self-denial, a taste for pleasures not sensual, a laudable desire of honourable distinction, a still more laudable desire to obtain the approbation of friends and relations. We therefore believe that the intellectual test which is about to be established will be found in practice to be also the best moral test which can be devised.

I should not have thought it necessary to refer to

this all but forgotten controversy, were it not that there is a distinct indication of public opinion in some quarters, so notably displayed in the despatches published in the "Blue Book on Simultaneous Examinations," in favour of the system of nomination as against competition—a feeling that competition as between members of the same race is a good test, but is inadequate and ineffectual as a test, as between members of different races and nationalities. I am free to admit that competition does not represent a perfect test. But there is nothing perfect in this world. Human institutions suffer from the original taint of imperfection. It is the best practicable test we have.

#### INDIANS' CLAIMS TO ALL COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS. .

We claim to be admitted to all Competitive Examinations for the Indian Services, no matter to what particular Department of the Public Service they may refer. We claim to be admitted to the Competitive Examinations for the Police Service held in India as well as in England. We claim to be admitted to the Examinations for recruitment to the higher offices in the Forest Department. We are excluded from these Examinations, and we are excluded because we are natives of India. Our disqualification is our race. The crime of colour is alleged against us. We are supposed not to possess the qualities required for these services, by reason of our being members of the race to which it is our misfortune to belong. But there are so many races in India. Do they all suffer from the same disqualification—are they all wanting in the precious qualities required for these services? For, the exclusion applies to them all. A slur is thus cast upon us. But we are not ashamed of our nationality. We are proud that we are Indians; some of us are the inheritors of a civili-



zation which carries the mind back to the dawn of human civilization. But we are also British subjects. *Civis Romanus sum* was the boast of the ancient world. It is our proud privilege to be British subjects, and we claim the rights which belong to our political connection. We are confident that the English people will not permit the perpetuation of invidious distinctions of race in the government of their great Dependency. Themselves free men, all in the enjoyment of equal rights and equal privileges, their natural instinct would be to extend to others the blessings which have made them so great, so happy, and so prosperous.

#### MILITARY SERVICE AND COLLEGES FOR INDIANS.

In this connection it is impossible not to refer to the exclusion of our countrymen from the commissioned ranks in the Army. The bravest native soldier, a born warrior, and though he may have in him the making of a great Captain, cannot in these days rise beyond the rank of a Subadar-Major or a Ressaldar-Major in the British Army. A Sivaji, a Hyder Ali, a Ranjit Singh, a Madhaji Scindia, could not now have risen to the position of the Colonel of a Regiment or the Captain of a Company. This ostracism of a whole people, the exclusion of the representatives of the Military races in India from high command in the Army, cannot add to the strength and the stability or the greatness of the Empire. The Romans, the up-bulders of the mightiest Empire in the ancient world, followed a different policy. Gibbon says :—

But in the eye of the law all Roman citizens were equal, and all the subjects of the Empire were citizens of Rome . . . and the bold adventurer from Germany or Arabia was admitted with equal favour to the Civil or Military command which citizens alone had been once entitled to assume over the conquests of his Fathers (p.45, Chap. XLIV., Vol. V, "Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire").

Trust in the people, confidence in the ruled, is the secret of successful imperial sway. Never was there a more striking illustration of this truth than in the splendid results which followed the adoption of this policy by Akbar. A stranger to the country, the son of a prince who had been driven from his throne, beset with enormous difficulties at the commencement of his reign, he surmounted them all and founded the mightiest Empire of his time, which for nearly two centuries continued to flourish with undiminished vigour. What was the secret? Where had Akbar learnt it? He loved the people and trusted them. They returned his love with an abundant measure of gratitude which constituted the greatest bulwark of his throne. The grandsons of those who had fought against his grandfather became his ministers, the Rulers of his Provinces, the Captains of his Army. Raja Man Singh carried the Moghul standard from the wilds of Assam to the mountain passes of Afghanistan. Himself a Hindu, he was made the Governor of the Mahomedan province of Kabul; and he subjugated for his Mahomedan Sovereign the Hindu province of Bengal. Birbal, another Hindu favourite, was sent in charge of an expedition to punish the Yusufzais in Swat, and when the news of his death was brought, his Sovereign shed floods of tears. In the words of Colonel Mallett :

To all alike, whether Uzbek or Afghan, or Hindu, or Parsi or Christian, he offered clemency, provided only that they were faithful, intelligent, true to themselves.

Russian despotism is not indeed to be compared to the benevolent rule of the British in India. But the native subjects of the Czar in Central Asia are admitted to the commissioned ranks in the Army. Here in Congress from year to year we record a Resolution in favour of the establishment of a Military College in India, at which

natives of India may be educated and trained for a Military career. I understand that, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, when he was Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army, expressed himself in favour of such an institution, as affording a training-ground for the scions of respectable families among the martial races in India, who might aspire to Military distinction. The martial races have done splendid service in the up-building of the Empire. An outlet should be provided for the gratification of their legitimate ambition. Thus wrote the shrewd, the wise, the statesman-like Sir Henry Lawrence many, many years ago :—

If Asiatics and Africans can obtain honourable position in the Armies of Russia and France, surely Indians, after a tried service of a century under England's banner, are entitled to the same boon, nay, justice.

#### SEPARATION OF CIVIL AND MILITARY MEDICAL SERVICES.

The question of the separation of the Civil and Military Medical Services will engage your attention. For the agitation in this matter we are indebted to the indefatigable efforts of Dr. Bahadurji and his associates. They have brought it within the range of practical politics, and, as I learn, have secured the sympathies of so earnest and influential a medical reformer as Dr. Ernest Hart. The question is not a mere professional one. It has a public side to it. The profession is interested, and the public also interested. I have great respect for the Indian Medical Service. The Members of that Service have been the pioneers in this country of the system of medicine as taught in Europe; but it is no disparagement to the Service to say that it is not fit for anything and everything, that it has not the exclusive monopoly of the knowledge of the most recent advances made in medical science, and that professorial and scientific work may re-

quire special training for which the Service may not afford facilities.

In this connection I may be permitted to refer, on the authority of the *Glasgow Herald*, to a recent ruling by the Secretary of State for India, under which he reserves to himself the discretion to disqualify a candidate for the Indian Medical Service who may have been considered qualified by the examiners. This is what the *Glasgow Herald* says :—

Thirty-three candidates, four of whom are natives of India, will compete for sixteen vacancies in the Indian Medical Service on 2nd Proximo. The Secretary of State for India, it should be noted, now has the power of rejecting any candidate who has been successful at the examination. This was not the case until a few months ago. A candidate who succeeded in passing the examination recently, and was able to produce the necessary certificates as to moral character, was objected to by the India Office authorities, but they were compelled to accept him. Immediate authority was, however, sought by the Secretary of State from Parliament, and in future the appointment of any successful competitor who may be considered an undesirable person by the Military Department and Medical Board at the India Office will be vetoed.

We have sufficient confidence in Secretaries of State to feel assured that the discretion here claimed will not be capriciously exercised. But when such a rule does not obtain in respect of any other competitive examination which regulates public appointments in India, the justification for this departure from ordinary practice does not seem to be apparent.

#### SEPARATION OF EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS.

The question of the separation of judicial and executive functions in the administration of criminal justice has always formed a chief plank in the Congress platform. It is one of those questions which we claim to have brought within the range of practical politics. Lord Dufferin declared it to be "a counsel of perfection"; and two successive Secretaries of State, representing the two

political parties in England, Lord Cross and Lord Kimberley, both expressed themselves in favour of this reform. The wisdom of the proposal is thus admitted in the abstract. But no serious effort has yet been made to recognize it in the practical work of administration. Mr. R. C. Dutt has showed in his admirable Note, which we have more than once considered in the Congress that the reform may be carried out with little or no extra expenditure. Sir Richard Garth has again and again accentuated the need for the introduction of this reform. Every year cases occur which add to the ever-accumulating evidence on the subject. I desire to make a suggestion in this connection for your consideration. I think a Blue-Book should be published every year from each Province by some recognized Association giving the cases occurring in that Province, which point to the need for the speedy carrying out of this reform. We shall then have paved the way for the reform by the inexorable logic of facts which will carry home conviction to every unprejudiced mind. A Resolution of the House of Commons in favour of the reform would perhaps help the Government to introduce it. Of course, a large measure of discretion must be vested in the Government in the carrying out of the reform.

The question is really not one of expense but is more or less one of prestige. In the official mind—I should not like to say this of all officials—there are many officials who think differently, Mr. R. C. Dutt is himself an official—there seems to be an idea that to deprive the chief Executive Officer of the District of his judicial powers would be to deprive him of his prestige and lower him in the estimation of the public. But surely prestige that is bound up with a system which in theory is indefensible, and which in practice leads to injustice, is a very poor sort

of prestige indeed, and must defeat its own object. Prestige which perpetuates injustice and excites discontent and dissatisfaction among the masses, for they are the chief sufferers by this injustice, is not worth having. It is no aid to the Government. It is a source of weakness and embarrassment. The old Scriptural text is true now as it was in the primitive days when it fell from prophetic lips—"Righteousness exalteth a nation." No Government can afford, under any pretext whatsoever—call it prestige, call it policy, call it by what name you like—to do aught or to suffer aught which may lead to defeat the ends of justice as between man and man, which all Governments are commissioned by a writ from on High to maintain and promote.

Again I admit that Governments are bound to proceed with caution. I would find fault with a Government that was not cautious, reasonably cautious, against which the charge of recklessness could be brought in any form or shape whether in regard to the people's money or the people's happiness or convenience; but the Government may in this connection begin the experiment in selected districts and await the result. I am afraid there may be parts of the country so disturbed that an experiment of this kind may not be desirable in the public interests. But, having admitted that the proposal embodies a counsel of perfection, public opinion has a legitimate right to ask Government to move on, and to give effect to it in a cautious and tentative spirit. It will not do in these days to recognize the perfection of a principle in the abstract and then refuse to give effect to it in practice. The present position of absolute inaction on the part of the Government in this matter is untenable. Let a great Government like ours yield before the importunate

clamour of public opinion has assumed proportions, where a concession made will have the appearance of having been wrung under compulsion. Let not the words "too late" be written upon the policy of Government in this or in other matters."

#### CRIMINAL CASES BETWEEN EUROPEANS AND INDIANS.

In this connection I cannot help referring to the deplorable instances of failure of justice in many criminal cases where Europeans are the accused and natives of India are the aggrieved party. It is a difficult and delicate matter to deal with; but we have a right to appeal for help to all right-minded Englishmen interested in upholding the fair fame of British justice. The Court of Directors in a despatch that is well known observed that it was not only necessary that justice should be done in India, but that the people should be convinced that justice has been done. Sir James Fitz-Stephen, a disciple of Carlyle, a worshipper of the doctrine of might as against right, of the doctrine of force as against the principle of moral persuasion in the government of communities, declared from his place in the Supreme Legislative Council that a single act of injustice done or believed to be done was more disastrous to British rule than a great reverse on an Asiatic battle-field. It is because we know that this class of cases is creating a great deal of dissatisfaction and discontent among the masses and is weakening the hold of the Government upon them, that we feel it our duty to call prominent attention to that matter. A writer in the columns of *India* suggests a modification of the law which is worth considering. He says :—

I believe that in cases like the above the Court ought to be a mixed Court, i.e., one of the Judges ought to be a Native and the other a European; and that the Jury should be half European and

half Native. This is the only practical means by which a great scandal in our administration of justice can be removed and a serious political danger obviated.

#### THE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS' BILL AND JURY BILL.

Two Bills are now before the Supreme Legislative Council which will demand your earnest attention—the Legal Practitioner's Bill and the Jury Bill. There is a feeling in some quarters that a wave of reaction has set in and is unsettling the minds of our rulers. We all recognise the fact that human progress is largely made up of action and re-action; that the cause of reform never moves forward in straight line, but that it swings backward and forward like the pendulum of a clock; and that the forward movement more than makes up for the rebound. However that may be, both these Bills have filled the public mind with alarm, which, in the case of the Jury Bill, has partly been removed by the re-assuring message which His Excellency the Viceroy was able to give to the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha in reply to their address. The object of the Legal Practitioners' Bill is to suppress law-touts. With that everybody will sympathise. But those who object to the Bill say, and I think with great force, that the Bill is calculated to suppress Mofussil pleaders rather than law-touts. Certain it is that the Bill proposes some very serious innovations. It proposes to arm the District Judge and the Commissioner of the Division with the power of removing a pleader, and the Commissioner of the Division with the power of removing a Revenue Agent. Under the Legal Practitioners' Act of 1879, this power belongs exclusively to the High Court. It is a power which, with the exception of a brief intermission of a few years, has always been vested in the High Court. The District Courts can only make recom-



mendations in this behalf. A power like this vested in the District Courts would, it was strongly urged at the Calcutta Meeting, deal a heavy blow at the independence of the Mofussil Bar. Pleaders will practice with a halter round their necks. They dare not hurt the susceptibilities of the District *Hakims*. They dare not show excess of zeal in any case in which local official opinion may have been elicited against their client. The client will suffer. The public will suffer. Undoubtedly the dismissed pleader will have the right to appeal to the High Court. But it is one thing to contest an open recommendation, and quite a different thing to seek to upset a final verdict. I may here remark that Her Majesty's Judges of the Superior Courts in England have not the power of disbarring a barrister practising before such Courts. It is only the Benchers of the Inn of Court to which a barrister happens to belong who can disbar him. When Her Majesty's Judges in England cannot dismiss practitioners who appear before them, surely such a power should not be vested in our Mofussil Judges.

The question is not one that merely concerns lawyers. It has an important public bearing. The public are quite as interested as the lawyers. The independence of the Mofussil Bar is a matter of public concern. To imperil their independence is to aim a blow at the beginnings of national life, and to sap the springs of constitutional agitation in the Mofussil. The Bar constitutes the pillar of our public movements. Our Mofussil pleaders are the life and soul of our Municipalities and our District Boards. They are the secretaries and working members of our religious and social institutions. There is no movement in the Mofussil which does not owe its origin to them, or is not mainly guided by them. With such a law as this, they dare not

take part in public movements, especially of a political character which might expose them to the displeasure of the local officials. It would be a public misfortune, it would throw back the cause of reform, if a law were passed which would interfere with the independence of such a useful body of men.

#### THE JURY NOTIFICATION.

The Jury Notification was issued as you know in 1892. A Commission was appointed in 1893 to report upon the matter. The Notification, as you are aware, was subsequently withdrawn. The object of the present Bill is, as defined in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, to give effect to such of the recommendations of the Jury Commission as have been approved of by the Government of India and Her Majesty's Secretary of State. The most important provision of the Bill is that which refers to the amendment of Section 303 of the Criminal Procedure Code, empowering Judges to require Juries to bring in special verdicts. But this is precisely the provision of the Bill, which is in entire conflict with the recommendation of the Jury Commission. This question of special verdicts was considered by them, and was unanimously rejected. And who were the members of the Jury Commission? The president was a Judge of the Calcutta High Court. Among the members were Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, late Officiating Chief Justice of Bengal; Mr. Wilkins, the present Legal Ramembrancer; and last but not least, Sir Griffith Evans, the present Officiating Advocate-Général, in whom the Government has such great confidence that ever since 1878, the Government has continued appointing him as a Member of the Supreme Legislative Council. Apart from the weight which must belong to the opinion of such a body of

men, we find the views of the Jury Commission in this respect are supported by high authority. The High Court of Calcutta describe the proposed amendment as "a radical and dangerous change in the law." The majority of the Judges of the Bombay High Court do not consider the amendment as called for, and the Government of Bengal, which issued the Jury Notification in 1802, accords to it only a qualified measure of support.

"After full consideration," says the letter of the Bengal Government, "the Lieutenant-Governor is disposed to agree with the Commission (the Jury Commission) that there is no absolute necessity for a change, as under the present law a Judge can, and a good Judge does, put the issue before the Jury, so that they should be obliged to give a verdict on each point, but since all Judges do not, Sir Charles Elliott would prefer to see such a change made in the wording of Section 303 as shall show that the procedure should always be as above described, the Judge laying down each issue and calling on the Jury for a special verdict on each."

The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is of opinion that "there is no absolute necessity for this change in the law," if a good Judge could always be found to preside at a Sessions Trial in a Jury District. The Judicial Branch of the Civil Service in Bengal is surely not so wanting in capable men that it would be difficult to find good Judges for the few Districts where Trial by Jury prevails. It seems to me that it would be very unwise to enact a law which is likely to create a great deal of public dissatisfaction, when the evil complained of, if it is real, might be remedied by administrative arrangements, unattended with any expense or inconvenience.

The Hon'ble Member in charge of the Bill in commenting upon this provision, remarked that it was liable to be attended with abuse. It seems, however, that there is no

real cause for alarm, so far as this particular section of the Bill is concerned. We have the assurance of His Excellency the Viceroy that the effective, but at the same time the conservative, administration of the law would be secured and in a form that would recommend itself to the approval of public opinion. The Poona Sarvajanic Sabha is to be congratulated upon having obtained this expression of opinion from His Excellency. I will quote the words of His Excellency in this place :—

I do not think it would be proper for me to enter into any discussion of the details of a Bill now before the Legislative Council, but I may say a word or two as to procedure. I cannot help thinking that a wholly disproportionate excitement has been got up over this matter. I gather that you, at all events, assent, unreservedly to the recommendations of the Jury Commission, and acknowledge, therefore, that reforms are desirable in the law. On one point there is admittedly great difference of opinion. If the Government had ignored that point and left it out of the Bill, this difference of opinion, and all the consequences that result from difference of opinion would have remained. The Government thought it better that this point should be carefully and deliberately considered, and it will be carefully and deliberately considered in the proceedings of the Legislative Council. As the Hon'ble Member who introduced the Bill stated at the time, that is the object with which the Government have introduced this particular provision, and I venture to hope that by the co-operation of all who take an interest in the due, the effective, but still in the conservative administration of the law, the result of the discussions in Calcutta will be that the law will be put into a shape which will meet the approval of your Sabha as well as the rest of the community.

I think I express the sense of this Congress when I say that we are all deeply grateful to His Excellency for this re-assuring message. The provision of the Bill, in regard to the appointment of special jurors is, I think, a distinct improvement.

The system of Trial by Jury in the form in which it exists is undoubtedly English in its character. But the principle which underlies it is the principle of the *Panchayat* system, which in this country is as old as the hills, and is graven deep on the instincts of the people. I think it will be admitted on all hands, that on the whole the experiment has been a success and therefore we are justified in calling for an extension of the system, for which, indeed, we have repeatedly prayed, and which, we find, is supported by the high authority of Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, one of the members of the Jury Commission. I am glad to learn that the Government of Bengal has recommended the extension of the system to six new districts. That Government is to be congratulated on this decision.

#### EXCISE AND EDUCATION.

There are other important questions included in your programme. If I had time I should have liked to have dwelt upon them: I should have specially liked to have referred to the question of Excise and the question of Education. We must press for local option. The Government has no right to thrust liquor-shops upon unwilling communities. We must safeguard the interest of Education—primary, technical, and high. I am bound to say that the Government expenditure on Education is small when compared with similar expenditure incurred in other countries, and it is inadequate to the growing requirements of a progressive community like ours. It is my contention that in India the expenditure per head of the population is the lowest as compared with British possessions in other parts of the world—in Asia, America, Africa and the Australian Continent. Here is a table which I have drawn up and which bears out this view of the matter :—

Countries.	Population.	State Expenditure on Education.	Cost per Head.
Great Britain and Ireland ...	37,879,285	£7,569,066	s. d. 3 11 $\frac{3}{4}$
Belgium ...	6,069,321	£676,297	2 2 $\frac{3}{4}$
France ...	38,343,192	£2,761,723	1 5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Russia ...	115,226,542	£3,820,496 $\frac{1}{2}$ s.	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
United States ...	62,622,250	£32,528,328	10 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
S. African Republic ...	119,128	£43,823	7 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
New South Wales ...	1,132,234	£693,652	12 3
New Zealand ...	626,658	£411,922	13 1 $\frac{5}{8}$
Queensland ...	393,718	£253,758	12 10 $\frac{3}{4}$
Tasmania ...	146,667	£44,864	6 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Victoria ...	1,140,405	£739,784	12 11 $\frac{3}{8}$
Western Australia ...	49,782	£10,397	4 2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Cape Colony ...	1,527,224	£147,424	1 11 1/6
Natal ...	543,913	£34,188	1 3/15
British Guiana ...	288,328	£18,116	1 3-1/13
Jamaica ...	648,558	£30,786	11-2/5
Mauritius ...	71,655	Rs. 45,352	As. 10 Ps. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ceylon ...	3,008,460	Rs. 508,116	" 2 " 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
India ...	221,172,958	Rs. 8,211,820	" 0 " 7-1/7
Bengal ...	70,000,000	Rs. 2,646,000	" 0 " 7 $\frac{1}{2}$

Thus it will be seen that while the expenditure on education per head of the population in Ceylon is over 2 Ans., in Mauritius, it is 10 Ans., in Natal, 1s. 3d., in British Guiana, it is 1s. 11d., and even in Russia it is 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., in India it is only a little over 7 Pies. Comment on these figures is unnecessary. I cannot say whether these figures include contributions made by local bodies. Even if such contributions were to be added, it would not, I think, make an appreciable difference.

We are indebted to Professor Oxenham for his defence of High Education. We are not in favour of High Education *vs.* Primary Education. We are in favour of all Education, high and low. They act and re-act upon each other. They are part and parcel of a

common and indissoluble system. High education does not benefit the recipients alone. It benefits the whole community, for if John Stuart Mill is to be accepted as our authority in these matters, the ideas of the educated classes filter downwards and become the ideas of the masses.

#### TOO MANY QUESTIONS BEFORE THE CONGRESS.

It has, indeed, been said that we should not take up too many questions, that we should content ourselves with a few, and press them upon the attention of Government. There is considerable force in this observation. By covering a wider ground, we lose in concentration, and we run the risk of losing in effect. The more important questions are apt to be lost sight of in the consideration of the less important ones. From the point of view of presentation to Government, this is a disadvantage! But the Congress being national, its interests embracing the whole field of national concerns, it is difficult to curtail our programme, without leaving untouched a large number of questions which affect important interests. I think, however, we may adopt a middle course. I think we should give special prominence to a few questions only, such as Indian Finance, including the Home Charges and Military Expenditure, the separation of Judicial and Executive functions, the question of Simultaneous Examinations, the still further reform of the Legislative Councils and one or two other matters which might be mentioned.

#### CONGRESS WORK IN ENGLAND.

From the consideration of our work here we may pass on to discuss our work in England. Our voice would be that of one crying in the wilderness but for our organization in London, the British Committee, our paper *India*, and our Parliamentary Committee. The money that we

spend in England is worth its weight in gold. (*Hear, hear.*) It fructifies abundantly in the increasing interest which is being created in England in regard to Indian affairs. It is preparing the way for an abundant harvest of good in which, under the Providence of God, our children and our children's children are destined to share. But how shall we fittingly describe the services of those good men and true, with Sir William Wedderburn at their head, who ungrudgingly devote their time and attention, often at considerably personal sacrifice, to work for us on the British Committee and the Parliamentary Committee! They say the word "gratitude," does not occur in our language. But the sentiment is there, deep-rooted in the hearts of our people; and in your name I desire to express our sense of profound gratitude to the members of the British Committee, and of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, for their disinterested services to India.

Never was there greater need than now for vigilance both here and in England. At the recent General Elections, our Parliamentary friends sustained a defeat all along the line, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Herbert Paul, Mr. W. S. Caine, (*cheers*) and other friends of Indian reform, have all lost their seats, though we hope constituencies will soon be found for them which will return them to Parliament. My distinguished friend, Mr W. C. Bonnerjee fought in the Liberal interest as bravely as man ever fought, (*loud cheers*) but he too was defeated. Mr Bhownuggree has been returned to Parliament in the Conservative interests. I hope and trust Mr. Bhownuggree will find time to read our programme and our proceedings; and if he does so, I am sure he will find that we are as warmly interested as we could be in the maintenance of Imperial unity, and that we are advocates of reform and



not of revolution, and of reform as a safeguard against revolution. He must know that reforms indefinitely postponed lead to violent changes—that reforms quietly, steadily, cautiously introduced, so that the new adapts itself to the old and the old becomes a part of the new, add to the stability and strength of Governments. I hope that as the result of his studies, he will see his way to sympathize with our programme. His conservatism in English politics need not stand in the way of his adoption of the very moderate programme of the Congress. Sir Richard Garth is a Conservative in politics. He is not able to accept the whole of our programme—he is not in favour of Simultaneous Examinations; but there is no stauncher friend of the Congress movement, whether among Liberals or Conservatives, and we Congressmen are deeply beholden to him for his defence of our cause, when it was assailed by the late Sir George Chesney.

#### FRIENDS OF INDIA ON THE LIBERAL SIDE.

We have endeavoured so far to steer clear of party politics. But the bulk of our friends belong to the Liberal side. With the exception of Mr. Pincott and Sir Richard Garth, I cannot at this moment think of any Conservative politician who sympathises with the Congress movement. From the Liberal ranks we have received the largest measure of sympathy. When the delegates went to England in 1890, it was the Liberal Associations which organized their meetings in the Provincial centres. When the Liberals came into power, their sympathy with our popular aspirations was marked. It was a Liberal Parliament that recorded the Resolution in favour of Simultaneous Examinations, though I regret to say that it was a Liberal Secretary of State who nullified that Resolution. It was a Liberal Government that practically

ordered the withdrawal of the Jury Notification. It was the mandate of a Liberal Secretary of State, Lord Kimberley, that saved in Bengal the system of Local Self-Government menaced by the Municipal Bill of 1892. It was a Liberal Government, too, that re-imposed the import duties on cotton goods in the interests of India.

#### INDIAN QUESTIONS AS PARTY QUESTIONS IN ENGLAND.

Speaking for myself, I will say this, that until Indian questions are taken up as party questions, until they become factors in determining the issues of party contests, they cannot occupy a prominent place in English politics or engage a large measure of public attention in England. Before the English people can be expected to do justice to India, they must feel an interest in Indian topics, and, they will not, and cannot, feel any interest in them, so long as Indian questions remain outside the pale of party politics. We have it on the authority of John Morley that "Indian affairs entered materially into the great battle of parties" in the last century, and the impeachment of Warren Hastings, which for its moral results was a great and far-reaching event, was mainly prompted by party considerations.

#### INDIA'S LOYALTY TO THE BRITISH THRONE.

What is our attitude with regard to the Government? I decline to discuss the charge of disloyalty which used to be brought against us in the early days of the Congress movement. Having regard to the official recognition which was extended to us by Lord Lansdowne's Government, this is no longer a question of practical politics. Are we then Her Majesty's constitutional Opposition in this country? I hardly think so. Our position is not analogous to that of a Parliamentary Opposition. A Parliamentary Opposition is bound to oppose all measures.

of the Government. It is its duty to oppose. It opposes for the mere sake of opposition. Its opposition is actuated by considerations of party spirit, under the influence of which the motives and the policy of the Government are liable to be needlessly aspersed. Our position is different. We are not bound to oppose the measures of Government. We are not expected to do so. Our countrymen would have a ground of complaint against us, if we did so, without sufficient cause. We do not oppose for the mere sake of opposition, and with a view to embarrass the Government, so that we may step into its place when the position is no longer tenable. We oppose bad measures. We support good measures. We may oppose the policy of the Government, but we impute no motives. Above all, our opposition is not dictated by any considerations of party-spirit, but by the sole and single-minded desire to serve our countrymen and to broaden and deepen the foundations of British rule upon the unchangeable basis of a nation's affections.

We should suffer a distinct loss of power were we to constitute ourselves into permanent opposition to the Government. If we oppose with discrimination and judgment, our protests will not fail to command sympathy and respect. But if we oppose in the spirit of captious fault-finding, if we oppose for the mere sake of opposition, if we oppose simply because somebody must oppose, we expose ourselves to the risk of being considered hostile critics, even when our representations deserve a better fate.

#### THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONGRESS.

To-day is the first day of the Eleventh Session of the Congress. Many Sessions of the Congress must yet be held before even our moderate programme is accomplished. The car of human progress moves slowly forward. But

he who has set his hand to the plough cannot afford to look back. He must spend and be spent in the cause: How many brave comrades, whose memories we mourn, have fallen; how many more will yet fall before the journey through the wilderness is accomplished, and we are in view of Canaan. To some choice spirits, elevated by faith and hope, may be vouchsafed, as was vouchsafed to Moses of old from the heights of Sinai, a glimpse into the promised land, a foretaste of that precious treasure of civil and political rights, which, in the Providence of God and under the auspices of English rule, is to be the destined heritage of their nation. As for the rest they must possess their souls in patience, supported by the undying faith that their cause, based upon the highest justice, must eventually triumph. 'A man with a conviction,' says John Stuart Mill in his Essay on Representative Government, 'is equal to ninety-nine without one.' The man of earnest faith is irresistible and all-conquering. We Congressmen know what we are about; we know our minds, we know our methods; we stick to them with resolute tenacity of purpose—with a faith which, so far as some of us are concerned, I will say, does not belong to the things of this world. And who will say that the future is not ours?

#### FAITH IN BRITISH JUSTICE AND GENEROSITY.

We feel that in this great struggle in which we are engaged, the moral sympathies of civilised humanity are with us. The prayers of the good and the true in all parts of the world follow us. They will welcome as glad tidings of great joy the birth of an emancipated people on the banks of the Ganges. For, have they not all read about our ancient civilization; how, in the morning of the world, before the Eternal City had been built upon

the Seven Hills, before Alexander had marched his army to the banks of the Tigris, before Babylonian astronomers had learnt to gaze upon the starry world, our ancestors had developed a great civilization, and how that civilization has profoundly influenced the course of modern thought in the highest concerns of man? Above all, we rely with unbounded confidence on the justice and generosity of the British people and of their representatives in Parliament.

#### CONGRESS ACHIEVEMENTS.

It is not that we mistrust the authorities here. But the higher we mount, the purer is the atmosphere. The impurities generated by local causes cannot touch those, who removed from local influences, represent in a loftier sphere of responsibility the majesty and the greatness of the English nation. Let us freely acknowledge the tribute we owe to the British Government in India. What Government could have accorded a speedier recognition to Congress claims than the Government of India has done? Within the lifetime of a generation we have achieved changes—beneficent changes of far-reaching moment—which it would have taken many generations to accomplish elsewhere, which in less fortunately situated countries could not have been accomplished except, perhaps, after bloodshed and tumult. All this we freely acknowledge. For all this we are truly grateful. All this fills with hope for the future.

#### TRUST IN ENGLAND.

Nevertheless we feel that much yet remains to be done, and the impetus must come from England. To England we look for inspiration and guidance. To England we look for sympathy in the struggle. From England must come the crowning mandate which will enfranchise

our peoples. England is our political guide and our moral preceptor in the exalted sphere of political duty. English history has taught us those principles of freedom which we cherish with our lifeblood. We have been fed upon the strong food of English constitutional freedom. We have been taught to admire the eloquence and genius of the great masters of English political philosophy. We have been brought face to face with the struggles and the triumphs of the English people in their stately march towards constitutional freedom. Where will you find better models of courage, devotion, and sacrifice; not in Rome, not in Greece, not even in France in the stormy days of the Revolution—courage tempered by caution, enthusiasm leavened by sobriety, partisanship softened by a large-hearted charity—all subordinated to the one predominating sense of love of country and love of God.

#### LOVE OF LIBERTY.

We should be unworthy of ourselves and of our preceptors—we should, indeed, be something less than human—if, with our souls stirred to their inmost depths, our warm Oriental sensibilities roused to an unwonted pitch of enthusiasm by the contemplation of these great ideals of public duty, we did not seek to transplant into our own country the spirit of those free institutions which have made England what she is. In the words of Lord Lansdowne, a wave of unrest is passing through this country. But it is not the unrest of discontent or disloyalty to the British Government—it is the unrest which is the first visible sign of the awakening of a new national life. It is the work of Englishmen—it is the noblest monument of their rule—it is the visible embodiment of the vast moral influence which they are exercising over the minds of the people of India. Never in the history of the

world have the inheritors of an ancient civilization been so profoundly influenced by the influx of modern ideas. In this Congress from year to year we ask England to accomplish her glorious work. The course of civilization following the path of the sun has travelled from East to West. The West owes a heavy debt to the East. We look forward to the day when that debt will be repaid, not only by the moral regeneration, but by the political enfranchisement of our people.

#### APPEAL TO ANGLO-INDIANS.

In our efforts for the improvement of our political status, we feel that we may appeal with confidence to the sympathies of the Anglo-Indian community. They are Englishmen. By instinct and by the tradition they are the friends of freedom. In regard to many, their interests in the country are permanent. In regard to many more, in view of the falling exchange, they are looking forward to making India their permanent home. Burke's well-known aphorism of the Anglo-Indians of his day being "birds of prey and passage" is well-nigh an extinct tradition. Our interests and their interests are identical. Their political status is not a whit removed from ours. If they have more influence in the Government, it is due to sufferance. They cannot claim it as a matter of right. Any extension of our political privileges would benefit them as well as ourselves. Difference there will always be between different sections of the same community, as there is in this country between zemindars and ryots; as there is in European countries between capitalists and labourers. But we are essentially members of the same community, in the sense that we have common rights and common grievances, and that it is our duty to stand shoulder to shoulder to remedy our grievances and to promote our rights. We are all

interested in the development of our manufactures, and we all know what pressure is brought to bear upon the Government here—sometimes masked under the guise of philanthropy, sometimes less thinly veiled—to interfere with the growth of our manufacturing industries. Here, as in other matters, united we stand, divided we fall.

#### PERORATION.

There is another agency—impalpable and invisible, noiselessly advancing onwards amid the din of our strifes towards the accomplishment of its own hidden purposes—which is helping us in this onward struggle. That agency is time. Time is with us—Time, present and future, is our ally. “Truth,” says the Latin proverb, “is the daughter of Time.” We rely upon the beneficent forces of the Unseen Time. I know not whether there ever was a golden age in the past. It is a beautiful tradition. It embalms the ever-present sense of dissatisfaction which humanity feels with the present. Dissatisfaction is the parent of all progress. It stirs us on to ceaseless activity for the betterment of our race. A golden age is, indeed, looming in the future. There is a golden age in store for us and our children. It is this feeling which reconciles us to the present. We feel that if political freedom, in the sense in which it is enjoyed by British subjects elsewhere, is not to be our lot, it will be the inheritance of those who, coming after us, will bear our names and carry on our work. In that faith we work. In that faith we ask others to work. It is the faith which is the cement of the Congress movement. It implies confidence in the progressive character of British rule. It implies confidence in ourselves. Let it not be said that this confidence is misplaced. Let it not be said that the enthusiasm which animated us in the first days of the Congress move-



ment is on the wane. The past ought to encourage us. The future ought to stir us into enthusiasm. The noblest heritage which we can leave to our children and our children's children is the heritage of enlarged rights, safeguarded by the loyal devotion and the fervent enthusiasm of an emancipated people. Let us so work with confidence in each other, with unwavering loyalty to the British connection, that we may accomplish this great object within a measurable distance of time. Then will the Congress have fulfilled its mission—justified the hopes of those who founded it, and who worked for it—not, indeed, by the supersession of British rule in India, but by broadening its basis, liberalizing its spirit, ennobling its character, and placing it upon the unchangeable foundations of a nation's affections. It is not severance that we look forward to—but unification, permanent embodiment as an integral part of that great Empire which has given the rest of the world the models of free institutions—that is what we aim at. But permanence means assimilation, incorporation, equal rights, equal privileges. Permanence is incompatible with any form of military despotism, which is a temporary makeshift adapted to a temporary purpose. England is the august mother of free nations. She has covered the world with free States. Places, hitherto the chosen abode of barbarism, are now the home of freedom. Wherever floats the flag of England, there free Governments have been established. We appeal to England gradually to change the character of her rule in India, to liberalise it, to shift its foundations, to adapt it to the newly developed environments of the country and the people, so that, in the fullness of time, India may find its place in the great confederacy of free States, English in their origin, English in their character, English in their institutions, rejoicing

in their permanent and indissoluble union with England, a glory to the mother-country, and an honour to the human race. Then will England have fulfilled her great mission in the East, accomplished her high destiny among nations, repaid the long-standing debt which the West owes to the East, and covered herself with imperishable renown and everlasting glory. (*Loud and long continued cheers.*)

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## THE CONGRESS: ITS MISSION.

*[Extracts from the Presidential Address to the Eighteenth Indian National Congress held at Ahmedabad, 1902.]*

To-day we begin our work for the 18th Session of the Congress. The mind is spontaneously carried back to the past—to the trials we have endured, the labours we have undergone, the disappointments we have suffered and the triumphs we have achieved. The time has not yet arrived for the final judgment, for the authoritative pronouncement of history, on the work of the Congress. We are yet in the midst of our journey, our long, long journey, through the dreary wilderness, which is to carry us to the Promised Land. Many will not enter Canaan. Some choice spirits have already fallen in the grand march. Many more will yet fall before the journey is accomplished, and the darkness of night gives place to the dawning of the new day. Some of us who cannot promise to ourselves length of days can only anticipate with the eye of hope and faith the blessings of the Promised Land. But the faith that is in us is strong and the hope that inspires us is proof against all disappointments—all reverses. . . . For myself, I believe the Congress has a divine mission. It is a dispensation of Almighty God for the unification of our peoples and the permanence of British Rule in India. Thus, we are gathered together under the ægis of an organization, political in its character and in its scope, but drawing its strength and its inspiration from those ever-living fountains which flow from the footsteps of the throne of the Supreme. Sree Krishna—the divinely inspired Sree Krishna—who has his shrine at Dwaraka in

the province of Guzarat, in his memorable admonition to Arjuna on the battle-field of *Kurukshetra*, said *Karma* is *Dharma* (good deeds constitute religion). Is there a holier *Dharma*, a nobler religion, a diviner mandate than that which enjoins that our most sacred duty, which has a paramountcy over all others, is the duty which we owe to the land of our birth.

What are trials—what are delays, what are disappointments—what is even the cankering worry of vexation in the presence of this consecrated task? They are the necessary incidents of the struggle in which we are engaged—the ordeal of fire through which we must pass—the purificatory stage which must qualify us for the rich blessings that are in store for us. They will strengthen our fibre, develop our manhood, ennoble our nature and call forth whatever is good and great in us. The chastening discipline of adverse circumstances is the necessary apprenticeship for the splendid heritage to which we aspire. We ought to thank God on our knees that the discipline is so mild—the sacrifice entailed so insignificant. Read the ensanguined pages of history—note the trial of blood and the hecatombs of mangled corpses, with all their attendant horror and desolation, which mark the line along which victorious movements of reform have careered their triumphant way. We live in happier times, under more fortunate circumstances, under the beneficent protection of a rule which affords the widest tolerance for the widest differences of opinion and evinces the deepest sympathy for all constitutional struggles for constitutional liberty. Yet we have our trials and our disappointments. The forces of reaction are now in the ascendant. The cause of progress has met with a temporary check. For the moment we have been worsted. For the moment we have

lost ground. But we Congress men never confess to a defeat. We bide our time in firm conviction that the turn in the tide will come and the forces which make for progress will once again assert their undisputed supremacy.

#### THE NEW IMPERIALISM.

Imperialism blocks the way. Imperialism is now the prevailing creed. Imperialism has always been synonymous with autocracy—the rule of the despotic monarch or of the victorious general who has made his way to sovereign power. In ancient Rome, as in modern France, imperialism meant the supersession of popular authority and the establishment of one-man authority. British imperialism does not, indeed, imply the extinction of British democracy. It means Self-Government for Great Britain and her Colonies, autocracy for the rest of the British Empire. What its latent possibilities are, it is impossible to say. Whether in its further developments, it will lead to the curtailment of democratic power is one of those secrets, hidden deep in the bosom of time, regarding which even the most confident predictions may prove futile. But all history bears record that the extension of territory and power over subject-races is fatal to popular Government. Let us not however speculate about the future. British imperialism implies the closer union—the more intimate federation between the English-speaking subjects of His Majesty. We stand outside the pale of this federation. We are not admitted into this inner sanctuary of freedom. We are not permitted to enter the threshold of the Holy of Holies. We are privileged only to serve and to admire from a distance. As a part of the Empire, we sent out troops to South Africa, and they saved Natal. As a part of the Empire, we sent out troops to China, and our Indian soldiery planted the imperial standard on the walls

of Pekin. Our loyalty is admittedly so genuine, so deep and so intensely realistic that even the Secretary of State had no conception of it. All the same, we are not the children of the Empire, entitled to its great constitutional privileges. We are Uitlanders in the land of our birth, worse than helots in the British Colonies. Our countrymen in Natal, whose splendid behaviour during the late war was the subject of unstinted praise, are still exposed to a degrading treatment which is galling to their self-respect and discreditable to those who permit it. British Imperialism, which is so sedulous in exalting British greatness, is not equally sedulous in opening up to us the possibilities of our greatness. British Imperialism, which seeks to draw closer the bonds of union between the Mother Country and the Colonies, has literally done nothing to cement the loyalty or deepen the gratitude of the Indian people. I would welcome an Imperialism which would draw us nearer to Britain by the ties of a common citizenship and which would enhance our self-respect, by making us feel that we are participators in the priceless heritage of British freedom. But we are as yet very far from this blessed consummation. In India, imperialism has accentuated the forces of reaction and has engendered a love of pomp and show which is apt to encourage extravagance and to withdraw attention from the graver issues of domestic reform. We are not, therefore, prepared to welcome the new imperialism in the form and garb in which it appears to us. Mr. Gladstone's sound liberalism, with its strenuous persistency in the matter of domestic reform, with its thorough recognition of England's grave responsibilities in relation to India, would be to us far more acceptable than the imperialism which indulges in expensive pageants, but which turns a deaf ear to the cry

of the coolies in the tea-gardens of Assam, which often subordinates our interests to other interests and which relies for the justification of Imperial Rule upon the pomp and circumstances of Imperial grandeur rather than upon the solid and enduring basis of truly Imperial achievements.

#### A RESPONDING VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

I have no doubt that the new Imperialism is a passing frenzy which the robust common sense of the English people will ere long discountenance and that it will soon pass away, like so many of the varying fashions of the hour. But whether that be so or not, we must be sleepless in our vigilance and unromitting in our efforts to stem the tide and roll it back. We have no reason to be discouraged. The past ought to stimulate us and to stir us into new enthusiasm. Ours is a brilliant record. I claim for the Congress that it has never taken up a question which it has not brought within the range of practical politics. You took up the question of the separation of Judicial and Executive functions. The matter is awaiting consideration by the Government of India. You agitated for the reform of the Police. A Police Commission is now sitting to elaborate a scheme of Police reform. You insisted in season and out of season upon the wider employment of our countrymen in the Public Service. The Public Service Commission was appointed; and though much remains to be done, the impetus you communicated to the movement will produce enduring results. Last but not least, your crowning triumph was the introduction of the representative principle into the government of the country. But your moral achievements, though less palpable and obtrusive, are a yet more enduring monument of your public spirit and your self-sacrificing

devotion. You have created a new spirit and have infused a new life into our people. You have brought together the varied and multitudinous races and peoples of India upon the same common platform and have inspired them with a lofty sense of patriotism. You have established a new bond of sympathy among them and their leaders and have taught them the value of organised effort, with all the infinite possibilities of good attendant thereon.

Yet there are those who take a desponding view of the situation—who say that our methods are faulty, that we have wasted our time and our breath, or that at any rate the results achieved have not been commensurate to the sacrifices incurred or the efforts put forth. There are moments of despondency which cast their shadows over the noblest and most unselfish natures, when the spirit appalled at the sacrifices made, shrinks back at the contemplation of the disproportioned achievement. In the anguish of disappointment, the question is asked—what is the good of persevering in methods and in sacrifices, when the outturn of them all is so insignificant? I confess I have nothing but respect for those who, with the utmost goodwill for the Congress and ceaseless in their endeavours for the public weal, are sometimes apt to indulge in these sombre reflections. But I ask—has the time come for the final judgment? I ask—are the results inadequate? Even if they were—what are 20 years in the life-time of a nation? The triumphs of liberty are not won in a day. Liberty is a jealous goddess, exacting in her worship and claiming from her votaries prolonged and assiduous devotion. Read history. Learn from it the estimable lesson of patience and fortitude and the self-sacrificing devotion which a constitutional struggle for constitutional liberty involves. Need I impress these lessons upon a people



who have presented to the world the noblest examples of these virtues? Every page of Indian history is resplendent with the touch of self-abnegation. In seasons of doubt and despair when darkness thickens upon us, when the journey before us seems to be long and weary and the soul sinks under the accumulating pressure of adverse circumstances, may we not turn for inspiration and guidance to those great teachers of our race—those master-spirits—who, with their hearts aglow with the divine enthusiasm, triumphed over the failing spirit, faced disappointment and persecution with the serenity of a higher faith and lived to witness the complete realization of their ideals? Chaitanya and Nanak, Tukaram and Ram Das lift the mind high up to the sublimer eminence of the divine ideal. India of the past is rich in these examples. May we not hope for their successors in the India of the present, in the India of the Congress, in the India under British Rule, with all the stirring influences of Western life and civilization? The responsibilities of the present, the hopes of the future, the glories of the past ought all to inspire us with the noblest enthusiasm to serve our country. Is there a land more worthy of service and sacrifice? Where is a land more interesting, more venerated in antiquity, more rich in historic traditions, in the wealth of religious, ethical and spiritual conceptions which have left an enduring impress on the civilization of mankind? India is the cradle of true religions. It is the holy land of the East. Here knowledge first lit her torch. Here, in the morning of the world, the Vedic Rishis sang those hymns which represent the first yearnings of infant humanity towards the divine ideal. Here was developed a literature and a language which still excites the admiration of mankind—a philosophy which pondered deep over

the problems of life and evolved solutions which satisfied the highest yearnings of the loftiest minds. Here man first essayed to solve the mystery of life, and the solution wrapped in the rich colours of the poetic imagination and clothed with the deeper significance of a higher spiritual idea, bids fair, thanks to the genius of the greatest Hindu scientist of the age, to be accepted by the world of science. From our shores went forth those missionaries who fired with apostolic fervour traversed the wilds of Asia and established the ascendancy of that faith which is the law and the religion of the nations of the Far East. Japan is our spiritual pupil. China and Siberia and the islands of the Eastern Archipelago turn with reverend eyes to the land where was born the prophet of their faith. Our pupils have out-distanced us; and where are we, hesitating, doubting, calculating, casting up moral results to satisfy ourselves that our gains have been commensurate to our sacrifices. Such, indeed, has not been the Royal road to political enfranchisement. The triumphs of liberty have not thus been won. Japan is an object-lesson which thrusts itself upon the view. Read her history; note her wonderful self-sacrifice, her marvellous power of adaptation, her patience, her fortitude, her indomitable energy and persistency, and let the most ancient of Eastern nations derive inspiration and guidance from the youngest which has solved the riddle of Asiatic life and has harmonized the conservatism of the East with the progressive forces of the West.

#### OUR CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTY.

In the constitutional struggle in which we are engaged, we need the co-operation of Englishmen and the sympathies of civilized mankind. It is England which has created in us those political aspirations, the fruition of

which we now claim. Our minds are steeped in the literature of the West. Our souls have been stirred by the great models of public virtue which the pages of English history so freely present. Where shall we find the like of them? Their sobriety, their moderation, their lofty enthusiasm for the public good, their scrupulous regard for constitutional principles, even amid the fervour and heat of revolutionary agitation, place them in the front-rank of political leaders for all times and all countries. Englishmen must accept the consequences of their own policy—they must cheerfully face the results which are the outcome of their own beneficent administration. They must gratify the ambitions which they have roused and adopt their administration to the altered conditions which are of their own creation. They have taught us the principle of adaptation to the environments of our situation, and they must not complain, if we, as their apt pupils, invite them to reduce to practice what they enforce by precept. We have no higher aspiration than that we should be admitted into the great confederacy of self-governing States, of which England is the august mother. We recognize that the journey towards the destined goal must necessarily be slow and that the blessed consummation can only be attained after prolonged preparation and laborious apprenticeship. But a beginning has to be made, and there seems to be no more suitable time for inaugurating this new departure, for commemorating the new epoch which is to mark the birth of an emancipated people than the commencement of the new reign. The Victorian epoch, memorable in its achievements, is still more memorable in the generous impulse to human freedom which it communicated in all parts of the world. We shared in full measure the beneficent influences of that

epoch. Our disabilities were removed, our rights were extended, higher ideals of Government were recognized and a loftier conception of Imperial duty enforced. A succession of illustrious Viceroys imparted an impetus to this beneficent movement. To the new sovereign, to whom on his Coronation we offer our respectful salutation, we appeal to commemorate his glorious reign by the still further expansion of those great traditions of government which have been consecrated by the example of his illustrious mother and which more than British arms have contributed to the solidarity of the British Empire. We have a special claim upon His Majesty's sympathetic consideration. The recollections of his Indian tour are to us a grateful memory. We know him. He knows us. His Majesty's feelings in relation to us are those of personal goodwill. Our feelings in relation to him are those of personal attachment and devotion, emphasized by the recollections of his general warmth, his truly kingly benignity, his royal condescension, his generous concern for all placed under his authority. The words of the Proclamation are still ringing in our ears, consecrated by the breath of his illustrious mother, our late Sovereign. We have His Majesty's assurance that he proposes to follow the traditions of his great mother, that the happiness of the Princes and the People of India would be to him matters of the highest concern, and that he would endeavour to promote the general well-being of all classes of his Indian subjects, and thus merit their loyalty and affection. We appeal to His Majesty to enthrone himself in the hearts of his people and to lay broad and deep the foundations of his Empire, by the practical recognition of the claims of the people of India to a just and adequate representation in the government of their country, by the gradual ex-

tension to them of that system of Self-Government which has been the invariable accompaniment of British power and civilization and which, wherever it has been granted, has been the strongest bulwark of Imperial Rule and has evoked the affectionate gratitude of the people. Under the beneficent influences of Self-Government, alien races, hostile to the British connection, have been transformed into loyal and devoted subjects of the Crown. We need no such transformation. We are already sufficiently loyal, sufficiently attached to the British connection. But we are anxious for the permanence of British rule—for our permanent incorporation into the great confederacy of the British Empire. The present system of government necessarily represents a transition. All history proclaims the truth that autocratic power is devoid of the elements of permanence, and that authority to be permanent must be planted deep in the affections of the people and derive its sustaining breath from the vitalizing springs of popular enthusiasm. The voice of the people is the voice of God and the right divine to rule is based on the unchangeable foundations of the love, the gratitude, the devotion of a people, evoked by the consciousness that they share with their rulers the responsibilities of government. Despotism represents a stage of transition, the period of which should not be unnecessarily prolonged. But transition must give place to permanence. All signs point to the conclusion that the period of reconstruction has now arrived. The forces are there; the materials are there; they lie in shapeless masses. Where is the man of genius who will communicate to them the vital spark and transform them into a new and a higher and a grander organization, suited to our present requirements and fraught with the hopes of a higher life for us and a nobler

era for British Rule in India? The statesmanship of Mr. Chamberlain, bent upon work of reconstruction and consolidation in South Africa, will pale before the splendour of this crowning achievement. We plead for the permanence of British rule in India. We plead for the gradual reconstruction of that ancient and venerated system, which has given to India law and order and the elements of stable peace. We plead for justice and liberty—for equal rights and enlarged privileges—for our participation in the citizenship of the Empire; and I am sure we do not plead in vain; for the Empire thus reconstituted and reorganized will be stronger, nobler, richer far, in the love, the gratitude, the enthusiastic devotion of a happy and contented people, rejoicing in their indissoluble union with England and glorying in the rich promises of steady and uninterrupted progress towards their high destinies, under the protection and guidance of that great people, to whom in the counsels of Providence has been assigned the high mission and the consecrated task of disseminating among the nations of the earth, the great, the priceless, the inestimable blessing of constitutional liberty.

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## THE PARTITION OF BENGAL.

*[The following is the full text of the speech delivered at the Calcutta Congress (December 1906) on the Resolution regarding the Partition of Bengal.]*

Babu Surendranath Banerjee who, on rising was received with loud and prolonged cheers and cries of *Bande Mataram*, seconded the resolution. In doing so, he said :—

Sir, I think this Congress is to be congratulated upon the singular piece of good fortune in having obtained the adhesion of that illustrious representative of a great and princely family (cheers) in the capital of the new Province to this resolution (hear, hear). Henceforth, Nawab Athi-kulla,—(cheers) the worthy son of a worthy father, who surrendered his princely patrimony in obedience to fraternal feeling—henceforth this distinguished representative of a great and princely family will be recognised as our Captain-General in the campaign against the Partition.

Under his leadership, under his guidance, guided by his prestige and the greatness associated with his honoured name, we hope to triumph in this memorable campaign (cheers). Sir, it is our misfortune that it should be necessary for us from year to year, to appeal to your indulgence to accord to this question, a leading place in your deliberations. I know not how long this necessity will last. But this I do know, that, so long as the Partition is not reversed or modified, the Bengali-speaking community will never be satisfied (loud cheers,) and that, no matter what concessions may be granted in other directions, they

will not conciliate our people or allay their prevailing excitement (*hear, hear*).

Sir, we are told from time to time, that there is a lull in the agitation, a subsidence of the feeling which has prompted it. The other day, I was reading a letter which has appeared in the *Times* from a correspondent in India in which that correspondent observed that the agitation was on the wane. Sir, we are in the unfortunate position of a patient suffering from a painful disease in which there are periods of intermission but the patient knows no rest or peace so long as the root-cause of the mischief lies ingrained in his constitution (*hear, hear*). Time blunts the edge of all sorrow. Time is our great healer. But time with its mollifying hands has not been able to soothe our wants. There it is festering in the depths of our hearts. There is no feeling deeper in the heart of the Bengalee than that which is associated with the home and which gathers round the domestic circle. The Bengalee, be he a Hindu or a Mahomedan, feels the strongest repugnance to the breaking-up of his home ; he relents with a fanaticism which is religious in its intensity. With equal pain and resentment does he view this separation from himself of his kith and kin, by the formation of a separate legislature and a separate Government. The partition is in the nature of an outrage upon the deepest domestic associations (*hear, hear*). Call it a mere sentiment—an irrational sentiment, if you like ; but there it is,—nobody can ignore it—moving the heart of our people with a power and intensity to which there is no parallel in the annals of our popular upheavals. That is not merely a sentimental consideration. There are deeper issues. They affect the whole of India. They concern



what with us is the problem of problems, namely, the question of Self-Government. If it were a question of territorial redistribution, all this excitement and irritation would be inexplicable. But the consideration is far more serious than that. The question is this :—

Brother delegates, from the rest of India, I desire to draw your special attention to it.—The question is this : Whether the public opinion of a great province, expressed with singular unanimity and unequalled emphasis, is to be flouted and treated with open and disguised contempt in a matter affecting the vital well-being of that Province. (“*Shame*”). Thus, in another form, in another garb, we have the old, old question of the assertion of popular opinion and the vindication of the principle of Self-Government. It is in this form and in this sense that the question appeals with convincing force to the heart and conscience of the whole of India. Brother delegates, last year about this time, when we discussed this question, the Liberal Government had come into power, with Mr. Morley as Secretary of State for India. We had never known Mr. Morley in that capacity. We knew him more as an author than as a statesman. We knew him better—at any rate, I knew him better—as the biographer of Cobden and Burke, as the author of *Compromise*, than as the radical politician or the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Many of us had, indeed, sat at his feet, in the sense that we had imbibed from his writings those lessons of political wisdom dominated by the higher considerations of expediency, which have their roots in the eternal moralities of things. We, therefore, hailed our political *Guru* as the controller of the destinies of our motherland ; we hailed him, welcomed him to the place, to the

seat of the great akbar, in the full confidence that he would fill it with more than the wisdom, with scarcely less than the beneficence, of the greatest of the Mogul Emperors. If, perhaps, our expectations were pitched too high Mr. Morley is responsible for it. For, who can read his writings or rise from their perusal, without coming to the conclusion, that here is a master-figure in the world of thought and action, (*cheers*, "*hear, hear*"), and that his caution was but another name for that temper of mind, which gathers in the forces of action preliminary to a determined and vigorous effect. We realised the difficulties of his situation and were prepared to make large allowances for that undiluted bureaucratic atmosphere, which he breathes every moment of his life, and in which he might be said to live and move and have his being. For of all the bureaucracies, which govern or misgovern countries (*hear, hear*), the stiffest, the most reactionary, the slowest to move, the one, above all others, gifted with the fatal gift of a superabundance of confidence in its own infallibility, is the bureaucracy installed at the India Office. But all the same, people expected that a man of Mr. Morley's capacity and judgment, with his great influence over the country and the House, would rise superior to his environments, assert his personality and vindicate those lofty principles of Political Wisdom and Justice, which are inseparably associated with his honoured name.

Sir, we have been asked to wait, and that, by no other person than Sir William Wedderburn (*cheers*), one of the staunchest friends of the people of India and the same advice has been emphasised by another distinguished friend in India, whom I am looking out for, on the platform and whom I miss and whose sympathy for

India and Indian aspirations is so well-known—I mean the Right Hon'ble Mr. Samuel Smith (*cheers*). We have been asked to wait. Wait we must; what else can we do? Waiting upon the will of our rulers has been our lot for the last three centuries. We shall certainly wait; but not in meek submission to the will of our rulers as the decree of an inexorable fate, but with the firm resolve to overcome that fate and work out our salvation (*hear, hear*).

Our rulers must recognise the new spirit, born it may be, of the huge blunder of the Partition, vibrating through our hearts, uplifting us to a higher plane of political effort. (*Cheers*). We are, sirs, no longer Orientals of the old type (*hear, hear*), content to grovel under the weight of an over-mastering fate (*hear hear*) but we are Orientals, Your Highness, of the new school, enfranchised by English culture and English influences, revived by the example of China, Japan (*cheers*) and last but not the least, of Persia, and as Orientals of the new school, we believe, that nations by themselves are made. (*Cheers and shouts of Bande Mataram*). Yes, we shall wait with patience, but it will not be the patience of inaction, but patience accompanied by vigorous, dauntless, self-sacrificing effort to undo that gigantic blunder and cruel wrong of the partition of Bengal. Mr. Morley declines to reopen the question on the ground that the Partition is a settled fact (*cheers*). We, in our turn, decline to accept it as a settled fact; we decline to accept a wrong—admitted to be wrong—an outrageous and deliberate insult upon the opinions of our people, as among the verities of our life and our administration. Mr. President, you have, through a long course of

distinguished services of self-dedication to the interests of your country, noted the triumphs of truth and justice in this world, even in connection with the attitude and the policy of a reactionary Government. A wrong is a lie and as such, it is opposed to the mandate of the Omnipotent and is in conflict with the moral order of the Universe. It cannot endure in this world of eternal verities. We are bound to undo it. And if we persist, go on continuing this agitation, the Partition is doomed, foredoomed to withdrawal. Mr. Morley, let it be said to his credit, does not adduce any justification for the Partition. He makes two significant admissions—that it went wholly and decisively against the wishes of the majority of the people concerned and that there were errors in the original plan. With these admissions, it is difficult to see how Mr. Morley can long stand where he is. We have only to give him a push, a persistent push, from year to year and I think we will dislodge him from that position (*laughter*)! A statesman is not bound to be logical and that is what Mr. Morley himself has said (*laughter*)! Read his *Life of Burke* and you will find that it is so. He says that a statesman is not bound to be logical, but, I take it, that he is bound to be reasonable. If it were any other person I should have used the word *rational*, but I will not do so. He is bound to be reasonable, he is bound to be just, he cannot overcome the paramount claims of right-doing.

Righteousness exalteth a nation (*hear, hear*) ; righteousness is the very vital breath of Imperial statesmen. The most reactionary of Indian Viceroy has told us that the British Government is based upon the eternal moralities of things. The most reactionary of Indian Law-makers

—I do not know how it is, but the most reactionary of men in their practical politics, are the most liberal in their profession of politics—the most reactionary of Indian Law-makers—do you know who that is?—some of us have had practical experience of him, the author of the Sedition Clause in the Penal Code—he has said from his place in the Imperial Legislative Council that a single act of conscious injustice done in India is more disastrous to the British rule than a great reverse sustained upon an Asiatic battle-field.

A wrong has been committed, and the Government itself has admitted it as such, and it is felt by the people as such. To perpetuate it and not to rectify it would be disastrous to the credit of the British rule. It will do more than anything else I can think of, to shake the popular confidence, the bulwark of States and Thrones in the justice and integrity of the Government. What is the Government for, if it will not rectify a wrong? That is the highest ambition, the noblest function of all Governments. It is their sacred duty to redress wrongs. Liberalism is wedded to progress. Progress involves the unsettling of the existing order of things. What has the Government been doing recently? Upsetting the educational policy of their predecessors, unsettling a settled fact. Mr. Morley admits that there are errors in the original plan. I take it, that if the Partition is to be a permanent institution and if there are errors in original plan, are they to find an abiding place in a permanent arrangement, fraught with the happiness and misery of millions of people? The position is so irrational that even the *Pioneer* is constrained to say that, in the light of this admission, Mr. Morley himself has no option left to him but to reconsider the whole question.

The *Pioneer* says that no question of temporary convenience can be made an excuse for perpetuating errors, and the right course would be to amend the Partition at once. But Mr. Morley's attitude is determined by the larger considerations of expediency. What those considerations are, he has not been pleased to tell us. He was challenged to state them by Mr. O'Donnell from his place in the House of Commons. But he did not accept the challenge. Are we then, to be driven to the conclusion that they are not such as will bear the light of publicity and the test of scrutiny?

Brother delegates, differing as I do from Mr. Morley's views, I desire to meet him on his own ground and I hold that even upon considerations of political expediency, he is bound to undo or modify the Partition. Is not the contentment of the people, an asset of some importance to the Government? Sir, in the case of a foreign Government, such as ours, it is an asset of priceless value. Her Gracious Majesty the late Queen-Empress is my authority for it. For, in that gracious Proclamation of the 1st November 1858, which represents the high water-mark of British statesmanship of the last generation, she said in the concluding words of Her Proclamation, that the strength of Her Empire lay in the contentment of Her people. The partition of Bengal strikes at the root of that contentment. It has caused wide-spread dissatisfaction, it has alienated the people from the rulers (*hear; hear*). There could be no practical co-operation between them, when there is this yawning gulf. I will cite an illustration in point. I hope I have not tired your patience. (*Cries of "no, no"*).

The other day, a high official of the Indian Government visited Rajshahi in the new province with a view to found a Co-operative Credit Society. The help of the local leaders was invoked. But they refused point-blank to co-operate with him. The local correspondent of one of the newspapers of Calcutta wrote that the people had lost all confidence in the Government (*hear, hear*). Lo and behold ! this is one of the fruits of the Partition. Mr. Morley wants new facts for him to reconsider the question. I present him with this. Here is fact No. 1. There are one or two more facts that I have to present to him.

A section of our people have lost all confidence in the utility of constitutional agitation, (*hear, hear*) ; they say that they decline to approach the Government with memorials and petitions. They say, what is the good of them all. Here, in the matter of Partition we have begged and prayed and protested, and entreated, the arts of sycophancy have been put into fullest requisition. But all in vain. They say, that self-respect demands that they should have nothing whatever to do with the Government (*cries of Bande Mataram*). I may say, gentlemen, that I am not in sympathy with that view at all. I think that the political agitation must be continued and I further think that petitions should be submitted. You may say 'no' to the end of your life ; and you will not convince me that in this matter I am in the wrong. We are agreeing to differ there. Whatever that matter may be, there is the fact that a class has sprung up in our midst who do not believe in petitioning or praying to Government and who do not believe in constitutional agitation. This is the fruit No. 2 of Partition which may be laid before Mr. Morley

(*Cheers*). I have got another new fact to lay before Mr. Morley and that shall be the last.

In the new province, before Partition was carried out, Hindus and Mahomedans in most of the districts were living in the utmost cordiality and peace. In some districts—I am glad to be able to say, not in all—the relations have somewhat changed. I do not enter into the various causes that have brought them about. There is the fact, fruit No. 3, the difference between Hindus and Mahomedans caused by the Partition.

Gentlemen, this brings me to the question of the attitude of the Mahomedans of India with regard to the Partition. Let me tell you that, before the Partition was carried out, with the solitary exception of Nawab Salimulla (*cries of "shame"*), everybody, Hindu and Mahomedan, was opposed to the Partition. (A cry, "so was Nawab Samimulla.") That correction, I accept. He was opposed, I remember now, to the smaller scheme of Partition but since the large scheme was introduced and when he discovered he would be the premier nobleman of the new Province, then there came a sudden change in him. That I think represents the true state of facts. The Mahomedan community were opposed to Partition and nothing has happened, since then, to bring about a change in the attitude of the Mahomedans in India, except that they have got a few more appointments in the ministerial subordinate police and executive service. Has the cause of Mahomedan education received an impetus? (*Cries of "No"*). Of course not. Is sanitation better looked after? (*Cries of "No."*) Mahomedans have no reason to be satisfied with the Partition, and as a



matter of fact, they do not support it. I will bring forward a few facts.

There were no less than 259 anti-Partition demonstrations held in connection with the celebration of 16th October last. Out of this 259, at 135 meetings Hindus and Mahomedans joined for the purpose of protesting against the Partition (*Cheers*). But that is not all. The foremost important anti-Partition meetings were those held in Calcutta, Dacca, Faridpur and Mymensing. The Presidents of all these meetings were Mahomedan gentlemen of light and leading, most of whom I now see on the platform. My friend, Khan Bahadur Moulvi Mahomed Yusuf presided over the Calcutta meeting. Our friend, Nawab Athikulla presided over the Dacca meeting. I know there were some pro-Partition meetings. But they were the work of one man, Nawab Salimulla, aided by his Anglo-Indian friends, official and non-official, (*cries of "shame"*). It is a great shame. That officials should support the pro-Partition agitation is a scandal of the gravest magnitude. The official support of public movements deprives them of all their significance. This fact was brought to the notice of Mr. Morley. And I hope that the Government of the new Province has taken some action in this matter. I won't be long, I will finish in ten minutes.

Gentlemen, the volume of popular opinion is rising day by day. The enthronement of popular opinion is only a question of time. 25 years ago, Lord Ripon said from his place as Chancellor of the University of Calcutta that time was fast approaching, when public opinion, even in India, was becoming the irresistible master of Government. There are those who would give the world to bring about the indefinite postpone-



"Long months have we carried on this agitation. Oh, God, for how much longer will it be our painful and laborious task to continue it ! From the depths of our heart cries out a voice, " Oh, continue it, so long as the wrong is not righted (*Cheers*). Let the banner, which has been uplifted float high in the breeze, the emblem of your Hope and Triumph, until success is yours ; and if, perchance, the banner should drop from your sinking hands, the God of nations will raise up others in your places, who will carry it aloft, and aided by the irresistible forces of time, which make for justice and progress, they will carry it to an assured, if not, a speedy triumph". That is the voice that cries out from the innermost depths of our hearts and we bow to it.

Brother delegates, with us the partition is what the Home Rule is with the Irish. For 100 years, the Irish have fought for the Home Rule ; for 100 years they have met with defeat and disappointment. For 100 years, they have again and again come back to the charge. We mean to imitate the Irish along those Constitutional lines, which will win for us the sympathy and support of civilised mankind, never yielding, but never despairing, possessing our souls in patience, with the firm confidence, that, as in the physical, so in the moral world, the darkest night is often but the precursor of the brightest day and holds concealed in its bosom the germs of those golden streaks which proclaim the advent of a new dawn.

Brother delegates, I have now one appeal to make to you. We want your help and your sympathy in this great struggle. Will it be extended to us ? Say, yes or no. (The whole house shouted " yes" vociferously). I thank you for this demonstration of sympathy and I beg

of you, when you go back to your homes, to record in your provincial meetings and your provincial associations, resolutions of protest against the cruel wrong which has been done to the people of Bengal. Let the Government know that when one province is injured, all the other provinces share the woe and the grief (*cheers*). The moral significance of such a demonstration, it would be impossible to exaggerate. It will constitute a bulwark of strength in our national struggle. It will invest the public opinion of a province with the potency of the national voice of all India. It will intensify the solidarity between province and province by making them the participators in their mutual sorrows and anxieties ; and therefore, Brother delegates, with all confidence do I appeal to you, to stand by us in this, the greatest struggle in which we are engaged, since we have come under British Rule ; and to such an appeal made by afflicted Bengal to United India, there can be but one reply and it will be a reply which will voice forth the predominating sentiment of this great gathering, *viz.*, that we are all brothers moved by mutual grievances, cemented by mutual hopes, animated by mutual aspirations and linked together by a common destiny, and that as brothers, we are resolved to fight for each other's rights and stand by one another in the hour of our darkest misfortune. *Bande Mataram !* (*Shouts of Bande Mataram*).

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## SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR INDIA.

[In moving the Resolution on Self-Government for India, in the Lucknow Congress of 1916, the Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjea made the following speech :—]

Mr. President, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen—I have the honour to move what has been described by your president as *the* resolution of the Congress. (*Hear, hear*). It is a great honour done to me, for ever since the birth of the Congress—and I may add even before its birth, for my public life dates earlier than even the birth of the Congress—I have been a champion of self-government, (*hear, hear and applause*), and if I can in any way, during the evening of my life, contribute to the accomplishment of this great end I shall descend to the grave with the consciousness that I have not lived and died in vain. I shall now ask Mr. J. Chaudhri to read the resolution. (Mr. Chaudhri then read the resolution.)

Brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, you have heard the resolution. The resolution divides itself into two parts as most of the resolutions do. There is the preamble—rather a long preamble—and there is what may be called the operative part of the resolution. The preamble sets forth the grounds for the demand. I need not repeat those grounds. We demand that immediately a Royal proclamation be issued announcing that it is the aim and purpose of British policy to establish self-government in India and that after the termination of the war, when the reconstruction, refashioning of the Empire takes place, India be uplifted to a position of

equal partnership in the imperial system. First there is to be a proclamation ; then the proclamation is to be followed by our being uplifted to a position of equal partnership within the empire. But in the meantime something has to be done. We urge that in the meanwhile a definite step should be taken towards the grant of self-government, and that step is to give effect to the scheme formulated by the joint conference of the Congress Committee and the Moslem League. That represents in short the sum and substance of this resolution.

Ladies and gentlemen, since we met last at Bombay, we have made some progress—I will not say considerable progress, but an appreciable measure of progress in the efforts which we hope in their fruition will culminate in the establishment of self-government in India. The Bombay Congress resolved with a mandate to formulate a scheme of self-government—call it Home Rule if you like : (*applause*), I have not the slightest objection to the phrase, the only point is that in the name you must not overlook the thing itself—to frame a scheme in concert with the Moslem League. A joint conference has been held and we agreed to a scheme which represents the demand of United India on the subject, (*hear, hear*). Ladies and gentlemen, I had the honour, the great honour, one of the greatest ever done to me in my life, of presiding over the deliberations of that conference, and I will say this on behalf of the representatives of the Hindus and the Muslim League that throughout they exhibited a spirit of compromise, of sweet reasonableness which, to my mind, constitutes the most valuable qualification for self-government. After all what is

parliamentary Government but Government by discussion ; and compromise is the essence of it, and that spirit of compromise was conspicuous in our deliberations. The scheme is before you, and it is the crowning testimony to the growing unity of feeling between the Hindus and Mussalmans (*hear, hear*). The solidarity of the two communities has been growing. Mark what took place in 1899 when the Congress met here and what is the state of things to-day (*hear, hear*). When the Congress met here in 1899—I was one of the delegates present—the Mahomedan community were opposed to us—with the exception of a few here and there. To-day the leaders of the Mahomedan community have joined the Congress. (*Hear, hear and applause.*) Three cheers for them. (Three cheers were given to the Mahomedans.) They received us with open arms and with greater earnestness and cordiality than might have been expected—we were received by my respected and honoured friend, the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad whose independence and keen solicitude for good understanding between the Hindus and Mussalmans has won him in an unstinted measure the esteem, the confidence and the regard of both communities. (*Hear, hear.*) Brother delegates, one weapon in the armoury of the enemies of Indian advancement which they use in season and out of season, which they have often used with such tactfulness and skill, is the alleged cleavage between the Hindus and Mahomedans which they themselves have been so sedulous in creating. I have often spoken to these reactionary gentlemen, and one is present to my mind at this moment. I visited him in London, visited his office, but he shall be nameless for the present. I spoke to him about our

demands. He is the editor of a great paper—I am afraid I am little by little taking you into the secrets—and what he said to me was ‘what will the Mussalmans say?’ That has been the uniform reply of these reactionaries to the demands of the Indian National Congress. Whether in the modification of the partition of Bengal, or the appointment of an Indian on the Viceroy’s Executive Council or the expansion of the system of election, these reactionaries, who have opposed our interests, have always posed as ‘the champions of Mahomedan welfare and well being. (*Cries of ‘Shame’*). Now, this weapon is ruthlessly taken away from their hands and they must seek the help which they are so sorely in need of in some other quarters. They look with wistful eyes to the mass of our people, the great body of our illiterate countrymen, and they pose as their champions and spokesmen. In their opinion—normally expressed in times when there is no excitement and no controversy—in their opinion the masses are dumb, inarticulate and unconcerned with anything except their own interests, never caring to peep out of the circle of village life in which they live and have their being. But when it comes to be the question of self-government for India, the government of our country by the people of our country, then all of a sudden, by a strange magical transformation the masses, in the opinion of these people, become vocal and even claimant and they may exhibit a concern, even a measure of anxiety, at the prospect of a change which would transfer authority from a foreign bureaucracy to their own countrymen—the blood of their blood and the bone of their bone. Gentlemen, will you be surprised to hear that this view is not only expressed by the



Anglo-Indian press, the extremists in the Anglo-Indian press, but it has been seriously put forward by Lord Ronaldshay, the Governor-designate of Bengal (*cries of 'Shame'*) to whom the Secretary of State has given a certificate of character (*laughter*) in reply to the universal condemnation of the appointment by the people of Bengal—a certificate based upon his views and his services which from the Indian stand-point constitute a distinct disqualification for that high and exalted office. Let that, however, pass. You and I are not the representatives of the masses, but foreign officials who imperfectly speak their language and live in a position of detachment and isolation from them ! To substitute, to seek to substitute, foreign officials in place of the natural leaders of the community who are their guardians and protectors of their interests is to reverse the order of nature—to set at defiance the decree of Providence written in every line of the open book of universal history. Gentlemen, the point is so clear that one has only to announce it in order that its absurdity may be seen. We are not the natural guardians of the masses ! And the Bureaucracy is afraid that if self-government is conceded the effect of it would be that their interests would not be looked after. Now let me ask :—Who are the people who advocated primary education in season and out of season, pressed the claims of sanitation, abolition of the salt tax, the reform of the police, the separation of judicial and executive functions, all intended to benefit the masses ? The responsibility of pursuing a policy of obstruction in regard to these matters must rest upon the shoulders of the Bureaucracy who aspire to be the guardians of the interests of the masses. That is one of the arguments

brought forward against us, namely, that if self-government is conceded the interests of the masses will not be looked after ; and I have demonstrated that we are the natural leaders of the masses, that we are the protectors of their interests and those interests will be safe, far more safe in our hands than in the hands of a foreign Bureaucracy.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are on the eve of a great reconstruction. The world after the war will not be the same as it was before the war. England and India will participate in that reconstruction. The object of the great war is to vindicate the sanctity of treaty obligations, to protect the rights of minor nationalities, to uphold the sacredness of 'scraps and bits of paper.' In the same spirit, I think, we are entitled to hold the gracious messages contained in our charters, and our proclamations should be vindicated and upheld ; for the moral law is not worked by latitudes and longitudes. What is true and good for Europe is true and good for Asia. The latest declaration on the subject of readjustment that we have had is the one made by Lord Chelmsford to an American correspondent, that the war has stimulated the aspirations of India politically as well as industrially, that it would be his duty to give them a practical form and recognition —now mark the words—to guard them—I am quoting the exact words—to guard them against the cramping influences of undue conservatism and also against revolutionary tendencies. A noble message nobly delivered. If his Excellency can carry out this message he will go down to posterity as one of the great benefactors of the Indian people. But brother-delegates, there has been of late a tendency to err on the side of



because it is the surest safeguard against revolution. History proclaims the truth that reforms indefinitely postponed or tardily carried out or inadequate in their scope prepare the ground for revolutionary propaganda. God grant that this blunder may not be committed in India. We know it was committed in Ireland. We are anxious that the same mistake may not be repeated here. (*Hear, hear*). Lord Chelmsford said to the deputation of the Indian Association—I was a member of that deputation—that reforms will not be rapid. Well, whether they be rapid or whether they be not rapid, let there be no reforms by dribblets with a background of mistrust and suspicion. Whatever reform is conceded, let it be whole-hearted, let it be an index of generous trust reposed in the people, and above all let it be adequate to the aspirations of India. Any reform that fails to satisfy this test must give rise to disappointment, create discontent, frustrate the object of all reform which is to keep pace with the advancing public opinion. I hope and trust that it will be Lord Chelmsford's high privilege to grant us reforms which will in a manner satisfy the growing aspirations of the people and be consonant with the scheme which has been formulated and which is now before you.

Brother-delegates, there is a wide-spread feeling all over the Empire that after the war self-government should be conceded to India or that at any rate a definite step should be taken towards it. The difference of opinion between the Nationalists and our critics is this. We say we should have self-government at once or in the immediate future. They say we must pass through purgatory on our way. Mr. Lionel Curtis (*cries of 'Shame'*)—never mind—he is a man who has

written several books on the subject. He exercises considerable influence over English public opinion. He may be an opponent of Indian aspirations, but let me try to meet him on his own ground. It is best not to despise an opponent, not to dismiss him with the cry of shame but to meet him on his own ground, and show the hollowness of the position which he assumed. That is what I propose to do. In his book, *The Problem of the Commonwealth*, he said : " The task of preparing for freedom the races which cannot as yet govern themselves is the supreme duty of those who can. ' It is—this is the most important point—' it is the spiritual end for which the Commonwealth exists and material order '—that is very important—' is nothing except as a means to this end.' The preparation of the race living within the jurisdiction of the British Empire for self-government is a spiritual end for which the Commonwealth exists—which is the sole justification of British rule in this country. Material order is the means to that. All administrative measures are subordinated to this spiritual end which overshadows every other purpose." So far so good ; we are all in agreement with Mr. Lionel Curtis. But then when he comes to the question of self-government for India he cries out ' Not yet.' That is an old cry. He says : you cannot have self-government now. Why not ? Because you have not got electorates. To that my reply is : Had you any electorates worth the name before the Reform Bill of 1832 ? (*Hear, hear.*) Is it not notorious that there were those pocket boroughs which were openly bought and sold ? And yet no one questioned the competency of the English people for self-government. Had Japan electorates when the Mikado conferred parliamentary

institutions upon that country? Had the Filippinos any electorates, suitable or unsuitable, when the American Republic resolved to concede national independence to the people of the Philippines? The growth and development of electorates is part of the growth and development of free institutions. They are inseparable and march together hand in hand. We are not fit for self-government. We are not fit. When in the morning of the world when Europe was sunk in barbarism our ancestors had those village communities which formed the centres of local self-government now and which survived the vicissitudes of time and fortune! We are not fit for self-government. Go back to the days of Vedic Rishis. What do you find? The king was an elected monarch—so says Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerji in his book. And even in the middle ages the memories of an elected sovereign linger in the institutions there. Go to the Islam. What do you find? Islamic society and government are saturated with the principles of democracy. Kazi, what is he but an elected spiritual head of the Moslem world. There is no community in the world in which the spirit of equality is more active than in Islamic India. And yet we are told that we are not fit for self-government. When shall we be fit, may I ask? When the Bureaucracy will think that we are fit? (*Laughter*). And when will it be? Doomsday (*renewed laughter*). There is yet another authority which may give us self-government. What is that? The Parliament of England. But it takes a long time to move Parliament. Sir Henry Fowler said on one occasion that every member of the House of Commons is a member for India; what is everybody's business is nobody's business. We

found that to be true. Nobody cares for India. England and Englishmen are so deeply concerned in their own affairs, absorbed in their own administration, that they find it impossible to pay attention to India. Who then, will determine the time when self-government is to be conceded to us? You and I (*hear, hear and applause*). For nations by themselves are made (*hear, hear*). Enlist on your behalf all the sympathy you can of Englishmen and Englishwomen of the civilized world ; but bear in mind you and you alone are the final arbiters of the destinies of the Motherland (*Applause*). Cromwell on one occasion made a memorable remark of which I am reminded at the present moment. On the eve of the battle of Nesby when the thunder and storm passed addressing his troops he said : ' Keep your powder dry and pray.' Pray by all means, but keep your powder dry. Don't lose sight of the material resources which are necessary for success in this world. Spiritual agencies are a mighty factor but the material resources are not to be neglected. The salvation of India is to be wrought upon Indian soil, by Indian hands, by Indian brains and by Indian agency (*applause*). Have by all means the sympathies of Englishmen all over the civilized world, but it is you who will determine the great final question for yourselves.

Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know whether I have already exhausted your patience (*cries of 'no, no'*). I have a few more remarks to make. Why is it that we want self-government? We want self-government in the interests of the Empire to which we are so proud to belong. We want self-government in the interests of the administration and for the efficiency of the administration. We want self-government for self-

protection. And finally, we want self-government for the higher national ends, for the moral and spiritual elevation of our people. I say we want self-government in the interests of the Empire. Who knows what will happen twenty years hence? Who knows what strife, what struggle, what difficulties there may be in the womb of future? Who knows that another war more sanguinary and more devastating than the one which is now desolating Europe may not again set in the world? Is it not the duty of statesmanship to be forewarned and forearmed, to take the necessary measures of preparation against a contingency of this kind? Who had ever dreamt forty years back after the battle of Sedan that England and Germany would stand and fight with one another? You talk of the man-power of Germany. Why? We are as multitudinous as the stars on the heaven. Rely upon us and trust us and the man-power, I say to the rulers of India, you hold in reserve in India is such that Germany will quail before that man-power (hear, hear). Marshman says in his History of British India that the grandsons of those who fought against Baber became under Akbar governors of provinces, ministers of his councils, *etc.* Let that trust be reposed in us and then England may view with serenity the mightiest combination that may be formed. Self-government is the cement of the Empire. It has knit together the self-governing Colonies of the Empire. It has converted hostile Boers into loyal citizens shedding their blood for the purpose of suppressing a revolution of their countrymen against the Empire. If self-government is conceded to us the same results will follow in this ancient land.

We want self-government for the ends of administra-



tion, for the efficiency of the administration. Brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I want to look at a concrete fact and judge our rulers by the test of that. We have anarchism. What is it due to ? I have no hesitation in saying and saying it from this platform, saying it publicly with all the weight of responsibility upon my shoulders—I will say this, that anarchism in Bengal is the product of past misrule (*hear, hear*). It has its roots in the economic and industrial conditions. We suggested this remedy in the address that we presented to his Excellency the Viceroy. We are asked to co-operate, but his Excellency left untouched the root causes of anarchism. How has the Bureaucracy grappled with this ? Repression is their only remedy. One coercive measure after another has followed in rapid succession—the Seditious Meetings Act, the Press Act, the Defence of India Act—and God knows what other Acts may be in store for us. And what has been the result ? Anarchy frowns upon the land and casts its darkening shadow over the horizon. Anarchy remains unchecked. The Bureaucracy has failed to grapple with it as the Bureaucracy was responsible for producing it. In the words of Edmund Burke conciliation and not repression is the sovereign cure of all public distempers. Grant us self-government and I will guarantee that in six years' time anarchism will disappear from this land. I promise to redeem this pledge—I make a personal promise—not a question of giving money but a question of giving services which will render anarchism impossible and if in six years' time I may not be able to redeem my word transport me to the Andamans (*laughter*) unless in the meantime I am not translated to that land where there are no congresses, no conferences,

where subjects committess do not prolong their deliberations in the evening—that land from which no traveller ever returns. Sir Henry Campbell Bannermann told us that good government is no substitute for self-government. I will say this that in fairly progressive communities self-government is the only guarantee of good government. Take the case of Japan. Take the case of Turkey or the case of China. The chaos, confusion and anarchy have all been dispelled by the breath of self-government. I make an exception as regards Persia. But Persia also would have been changed and her political frame work would have been as solidly established as others but for the intervention of European powers. Good government is no substitute for self-government, but self-government is necessary for good government and we claim it for the purpose of good government. If we had self-government what do you think we should do? Suppose I was the president of the republic—which I shall never be—suppose I was the president what do you think I should do? The first thing I should do would be to pass a law in favour of free and compulsory education. The next thing I would do would be the separation of judicial and executive functions. The third thing would be to improve the police. And how? By importing into the higher branches of the service a strong Indian element capable of looking after the inferior grades. Lastly, I would abolish the duty on salt. We have been pressing these things for years together but we could not get them. If we had self-government we should have an Arms Act upon the lines of the British Act. I would not repeal it except in that form. And I would have volunteering and national militia. Let the

Government make these concessions and anarchy will disappear. A friend of mine, Mr. Chatterjee, yesterday said if volunteering were granted it would go far to check the growth of anarchy. Mr. Chatterjee who is defending a number of anarchists speaks with knowledge which I don't possess. He had again and again dinned this into the ears of the Government but they did not listen.

In the third place we want self-government for the purpose of self-protection. You might ask—what do you mean by self-protection? At the present moment there is visible on the horizon a cloud which is no bigger than a man's hand, which I am afraid unless timely protest is made is destined to grow into larger proportions. What is that cloud? The prospect of a federal council of the Empire from which we are to be excluded and only colonial representatives are to be present. Ladies and gentlemen, we must put our own house in order before the consummation takes place. We are face to face with a great disaster and that being so we want Home Rule, self-government, so that the self-governing colonies may have no control over the administration.

We want self-government finally for the highest ends of national system, for the moral elevation of the people. Political inferiority involves moral degradation. It is galling to our self-respect. The mind and conscience of a free man are not the mind and conscience of a slave. A nation of slaves would never have produced a Patanjali, a Buddha, or a Valmiki. We want self-government in order that we might wipe off from us the badge of political inferiority and lift our heads among the nations of the earth and fulfil the great

destinies that are in store for us under the blessing of Divine Providence. We want self-government not only in our own interests but for the sake of humanity at large. In the morning of the world on the banks of the Ganges and on the banks of the Jumna the Vedic Rishis sang those hymns which represent the first yawnings of infant humanity towards the Divine ideal. In the morning of the world before the Eternal City had been built on the seven hills we were the spiritual preceptors of mankind. Kashi was built. Kashi was flourishing before Babylon. Our past takes us back to the dim twilight of history. In those days when the world was sunk into barbarism we were the guides and instructors of mankind. Has our mission been fulfilled now? It has been frustrated but not fulfilled. It has to be fulfilled. It must be fulfilled so that Europe may be rescued from the gross materialism, from the degraded culture which at the present moment have heaped the battle-fields of Europe with hecatombs of dead. It is our mission to become once again the spiritual guides of mankind, but we cannot fulfil that mission unless and until we ourselves are emancipated, we ourselves are free. That is the first indispensable equipment for the discharge of that great mission.

Ladies and gentlemen, therefore it comes to this, that our campaign for self-government is not a political one. It is something higher, and nobler. It is a religious and moral mission in which the fate and destinies of humanity are involved. Such are the ideals, the hopes and the aspirations that inspire us to-day. To-day is a red letter day in our history. To-day, the Hindus and Mahomedans and all ranks of the National party are united.

on this platform inspired by a common resolve and a common purpose.

May the memory of this day be embalmed in the recollections of posterity, of the most distant generations by the inauguration of a new campaign for the attainment of self-government. It is no use our holding a session for three days and then going to sleep. We must resolve in our hearts and take a vow such as we did in connection with the Swadeshi movement and enter into a solemn league and covenant before God and man that you will not abstain from these labours until we establish in this land the great and inestimable blessing of self-government (*hear, hear and applause*). Our cause is the noblest that ever adorned the heart of man, founded upon the highest considerations of justice. We have to overcome many difficulties in the way. We are in measurable distance of victory. The promised land is in sight. From the Sinai of Hope and Faith we behold its splendour. But whether we shall enter it or whether our entrance shall be delayed or indefinitely postponed will depend upon us. You therefore equip yourselves for the great work that lies before you. Pursue the campaign with energy and devotion and selflessness, sinking all differences and all divergencies, uniting yourselves upon one common platform and God will consecrate your efforts with his blessings and lead you to the promised land which will be your heritage and the destined heritage of your children and your children's children (*Loud applause*).

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# SPEECHES IN THE IMPERIAL COUNCIL.



## UNIVERSITY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

*[At a meeting of the Imperial Council on January 6, 1914, the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Banerjea moved the following Resolution and said :]*

My Lord, I have the honour to move the following Resolution :—

‘ That this Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council the publication of—

(a) all official papers in the possession of the Government of India, including correspondence, if any, with the Senate of the Calcutta University and His Excellency the Rector, relating to the affiliation of the Ananda Mohan College up to the B.A. standard, and the orders of the Government thereon, together with the replies, if any, to the representations of local public bodies and meetings :

(b) all official papers in the possession of the Government of India, including correspondence, if any, with Provincial Governments and Local Administrations leading to the announcement made in paragraph 25 of the Government of India Resolution, dated Delhi, 21st February, 1913, regarding the desirability of introducing the School Final Examination in Provinces where it has not been introduced, and in paragraph 47, of placing the recognition of schools for purposes of presenting candidates for Matriculation in the hands of the Local Governments, and all subsequent correspondence relating thereto.’

My Lord, my resolution is an exceedingly simple one. It is a mere request for information, an appeal to Your Excellency's Government to take the public into

their confidence in regard to certain educational proposals which have excited considerable controversy and which, in my Province, have awakened a general feeling of alarm and anxiety. My Lord, in matters educational, there are, and there can be no secrets ; for if there is one department of the State more than another in which the confidence of the public and their co-operation are indispensable for the ends of efficient administration it is the Department of Education. Lord Curzon is my authority for it and be it remembered that it was during His Lordship's time that the Official Secrets Act was passed. Addressing the Educational Conference, which met at Simla on the eve of the constitution of the Universities Commission, Lord Curzon said ' Concealment has been no part of my policy since I have been here in India, and the education of the people is assuredly the very last subject to which I should think of applying any such policy.' My Lord, backed by this high and distinguished authority, I appeal with some confidence to Your Excellency's Government for the publication of the papers referred to in my Resolution.

My Lord, in dealing with this resolution, I feel that I ought to clear my ground and guard against any misapprehension which the situation might give rise to. I wish to state as distinctly and as clearly as I can that I have introduced this resolution in no spirit of controversy or contention and that I have been inspired by a genuine desire to remove any misunderstanding or misapprehension, and to secure thorough co-operation between the representatives of the people and the representatives of the Government in regard to those vital issues raised in the resolution which forms the basis of my motion.

My Lord, in the first place, I feel that I owe it to myself and to my educated countrymen to express our deep sense of gratitude to Your Excellency for the impetus which the cause of education has received during Your Excellency's administration. If education and sanitation are the watchwords of the educated community, they have also, in the words of Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, become the watchwords of the Government of India. An Education Department has been created and now forms a part of the Government of India. The educational expenditure has steadily grown, and as Your Excellency was pleased to remind us in the speech with which Your Excellency closed the Simla session, the words of which are still ringing in our ears, the educational expenditure under Your Excellency's administration has risen from 4 to nearly 6 crores of rupees a year. His Majesty's visit to India and the deep solicitude which His Majesty evinced for the spread of education among his Indian subjects, have helped to place the educational problem in the forefront among public considerations. His Majesty's message of hope and sympathy combined with the active and living interest awakened in educational problems among the Indian community and the highest circles of Government, have opened up vast possibilities of educational growth and expansion.

May I express the fervent hope that nothing may be done, that no policy may be followed, which may mar or even dim this fair and beautiful prospect. My Lord, the first part of my resolution refers to the Ananda Mohan College. Hon'ble Members may perhaps like to know something about this College. It is a second grade college at the headquarters station of the Mymensingh



District. Mymensingh is one of the biggest, one of the richest, one of the most populous districts in East Bengal. It has a population of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions and comprises an area of 6,332 square miles. My Lord, there is only one single solitary second grade college to meet the requirements in respect of high education of this vast and multitudinous people—a people as large as was the population of England in the time of Charles the First. The Ananda Mohan College is so called after the late Mr. Ananda Mohan Ghose, who was a native of this district, and who was one of the foremost men of his generation. Religious, social and political reformer, Mr. Ananda Mohan Ghose rightly regarded education as the great instrument for the elevation of his countrymen. He was one of the founders of the City College in Calcutta, which, I think my hon'ble friends in charge of the Education Department will admit, has for the last 30 years been doing admirable work. He founded a branch school in the Mymensingh District and raised it to the status of a second grade institution. His death in 1906, combined with the exacting requirements of the recent University regulations, which have made heavy demands upon the financial resources of College authorities, led to the abolition of this College in 1908. But, my Lord, the people of Mymensingh had tasted the fruits of the tree of knowledge, and not death but life and an awakened educational impulse was their reward. A movement was set on foot for the establishment of a second grade college. The local public, be it said to their lasting credit, raised a subscription of Rs. 1,28,000. The Government, with a generosity which was truly admirable, made a grant of Rs. 50,000 and also offered a grant-in-aid of Rs. 6,000

a year, and the college was re-established. Judging by its results, judging by the growing number of its pupils, it must be held that the college has been a highly successful institution. But, My Lord, things in Mymensingh and in India are not stationary, any more than they are in any other part of the civilised world. Things are moving fast, very fast, under the impetus of world-wide forces of irresistible potency and the inspiration of progressive ideals created by education and fostered by a wise and beneficent Government. My Lord, I have already referred to the profound influence of the Royal Visit and the stimulus which it has communicated to the educational impulses of our people. I will say this, and I think without fear of challenge or contradiction, that the movement for the creation of a Hindu University at Benares, and also that for the establishment of a Mahomedan University at Aligarh, had their roots in the awakened educational enthusiasm which the Royal Visit had evoked. In Mymensingh the feeling manifested itself in an eager demand for a first grade college. In January, 1913, the College Council, at the head of which is the Magistrate and Collector, Mr. Blackwood—a name honoured in Eastern Bengal for the liberality of his views and his deep sympathy with the people—submitted an application to the Senate of the Calcutta University for raising the status of the Institution to that of a first grade college, for affiliation up to the B.A. standard in Arts. The movement was warmly taken up by the Magistrate-Collector as well as the Commissioner of the Division. The Government promised an initial grant of Rs. 50,000 and offered to raise a grant-in-aid to Rs. 11,000 a year if the local public would raise Rs. 50,000.

The district was ablaze with enthusiasm. I am not guilty of the slightest exaggeration of language. Facts are more potent, more eloquent than any testimony which I might bear to the public spirit of the people of Mymensingh. In a few hours' time—not days or weeks, but a few hours' time—a hundred of the leading men of Mymensingh signed a legal document, accepted by the Commissioner of the Division and the Magistrate-Collector, by which they held themselves responsible for a sum of Rs. 50,000. The Government was responsive and the Government was sympathetic. Two Directors of Public Instruction, one after another—Mr. Kuchler, late Director of Public Instruction, and Mr. Hornell, present Director of Public Instruction—both were in favour of raising the status of the College. The University Inspectors visited the College, reported favourably upon the application of the College Council, the University recommended its affiliation up to the B.A. standard in Arts, limiting the number of subjects to be taught; and now, My Lord, a shadow was thrown over the patriotic efforts of the people of Mymensingh. The Government of India declined to grant the affiliation. The Senate had made the recommendation, the University Inspectors had supported it, the Government of Bengal was in sympathy with it, but the Government of India declined to sanction the affiliation of the College on the ground, as I understand—I am speaking without chapter and verse, but I have tried to test my information as far as I could—that the college building was not ready and the staff had not been appointed. Now, My Lord, I desire to point out that under very much the same circumstances, the conditions being almost exactly the same, neither



and a private institution. My Lord, I claim on behalf of the private colleges, and I claim with some little warmth of feeling, having been for the past 40 years connected with a private college, that they are entitled to the sympathetic consideration of the Government, in view of their limited resources and the arduous nature of the difficulties with which they have to grapple. The Education Commission of 1882 recommended the encouragement of private enterprise in matters educational on the ground that the effect of it would be to foster educational institutions of different types. My Lord, I hope and trust that the papers which will be laid on the table in response to my appeal will disclose some reason for this differentiation between Government and private colleges. But there seems to have dawned at last a ray of light and hope on the situation, for I understand that an assurance has been given that the first B. A. class in connection with the Anand Mohun College will be opened in July, 1914, and I hope my Hon'ble friends in charge of the Educational Department would be in a position to repeat this assurance from their places in the Council Chamber.

My Lord, the next part of my resolution has reference to the School Final Examination. Facts and figures are given in the Government Resolution. From those facts and figures I gather that in Madras the School Final has been making steady progress. The same cannot be said in respect of the other provinces. But even if the success of the experiment was much more assured, and the system was much more popular in Madras and in other parts of the country, that would not be an argument in favour of its application to Bengal, for as the Government itself has observed in

the Resolution which we are discussing, the educational systems of the different provinces vary and a system which may suit Madras may not be applicable to Bengal. My Lord, whatever presumption may be raised in favour of the extension of this system to Bengal from its success in Madras, it is negatived by the experience that we have had in Bengal itself. I will give some facts. The School Final was introduced in Bengal, in Western Bengal not in Eastern Bengal, in connection with primary schools and the middle schools, English and Vernacular. They have been in operation there since 1904. On the 4th February, 1913, the Director of Public Instruction declares in a circular note, from which I shall presently read an extract, that it has absolutely failed and that the system should be discontinued. The circular letter was addressed by the Director of Public Instruction to the Inspectors of Schools in the Rajshahi Division, the Dacca Division and the Chittagong Division. This is the extract :

‘ Observation of the system that has been at work since 1904 has convinced the Educational and Executive Officers and the general public of West Bengal of its inefficiency and unsuitableness to prevailing conditions. It is therefore proposed to revert to the old system and once more conduct the final examination of Standard VI as a public examination, upon whose results the Middle Scholarships and Middle Vernacular and Middle English certificates will be awarded. Before, however, addressing Government the Director of Public Instruction is desirous of ascertaining the views of Educational and Executive Officers of Eastern Bengal, where the same system of examination as outlined above prevails.’

My Lord, the educational system of East Bengal and that of West Bengal do not materially differ. Therefore this pronouncement though applicable to

West Bengal is really also applicable to East Bengal. My contention is this, that if in the primary schools and in the middle schools, vernacular and English, the system of school final has failed, have we not an overwhelming presumption in favour of the contention that it is doomed, foredoomed, to failure when applied to the high schools? But, my Lord, there is another consideration which has to be weighed in the balance in this connection, and it is this: those who believe in University education, who regard it as having been one of the most potent factors in making modern India what it is to-day, must view with grave alarm and misgivings the operation and growth of a system which must encroach upon the ground covered by the University and eventually seriously restrict it. Speaking for the people of Bengal, and I hope that the sentiment will be re-echoed by my friends from the provinces, I say that we view with the gravest anxiety the proposed extension of this system to the high schools in our Presidency.

Now, my Lord, I pass on to the third and last branch of my subject, *viz.*, the recognition of schools. Paragraph 47 of Government of India Resolution says that in Provinces where it does not exist the Government of India think it desirable that the power of recognition of schools should be vested in the Local Government. In Bengal, my Lord, this power is now exercised by the Senate, and if this proposal were carried out the effect of it would be to transfer this power from the Senate and vest it in the Local Government. My Lord, the proposal has caused widespread alarm and anxiety throughout Bengal. Meetings have been held all over the Province culminating in a great

demonstration at the Town Hall under the presidency of the venerable Raja Peary Mohun Mukherjee, the Nestor of the Bengal Zemindars and himself one of the most brilliant products of the Calcutta University. Speaking from his place as President of the Town Hall meeting, he voiced the public sentiment when he said that he was there as a representative of the past to join hands with the representatives of the present and invoke the Divine blessing upon their endeavour to rescue from peril their bounteous mother, the University of Calcutta, and the cause of education generally. My Lord, next to religion, education is our most sacred concern. It touches our deepest instincts. Throughout our long and chequered history, despite its many vicissitudes, religion and education have gone hand in hand. Our holiest shrines of worship are our noblest temples of learning. Benares stirs the religious fervour of the Hindu world. Benares evokes the admiration by the profundity of its learning. Rightly or wrongly, rightly from my point of view, we regard this proposal, if it is to be extended to Bengal, and perhaps to other parts of India, as constituting a grave menace to the cause of higher education. And what is the justification for it? Has the Senate of the Calcutta University asked to be relieved; or has the efficiency of the work suffered by reason of this power being vested in the Senate? I think, my Lord, both these questions must be answered in the negative. The Government of Bengal the other day, with the full concurrence of the Government of India, consulted the Senate of the Calcutta University, and I understand that a weighty protest has been recorded against this proposal. In any case, the Senate do not want to be relieved. They



feel that they can bear the burden and discharge the responsibility. Has there been any lack of efficiency? I say 'No,' and I think that Hon'ble Members will also say 'No,' when they have heard me. The highest official authority has borne testimony to the character of the work which the Senate of the Calcutta University have done in this respect. The Bengal Administration Report is the voice and organ of the Bengal Government, and this is the testimony recorded in the Bengal Administration Report for the year 1911-12, as regards the character of this work :

'Another important task of the University is the inspection of the High English Schools. The number of these schools recognised by the University is 619, of which 63 are under the management of the Government. During the last five years the Syndicate has made a systematic examination of these schools and has succeeded in remedying many of the defects that were discovered. It has laid down that each recognised school must have on its staff at least two graduates and two F.A. or Intermediate passed teachers, a minimum scale of pay for teachers has been fixed ; sufficient accommodation and equipment have to be provided, libraries maintained and arrangements made for physical exercise.'

Then comes the most important sentence of all :

'The granting or refusal of these privileges of affiliation or recognition is the foundation of the disciplinary power of the University'

My Lord, it is now proposed to weaken the foundation of this disciplinary power by withdrawing the right of recognition from the Senate. Is that conducive to its efficiency, its prestige, or its dignity? Here we have the highest testimony possible, coming from the Government of Bengal itself, in favour of the continuance of this power in the hands of the Senate as being essential to its disciplinary jurisdiction. I hope, my Lord, that with

this testimony, coming from the highest official source, the Government of India in the Education Department will pause before it proceeds to extend this measure to the Province of Bengal. The Resolution says that the object of the transfer of this power from the Senate to the Government is to free the Universities for higher work and for the more effective control of the affiliated colleges. The effectiveness of the control exercised by the Calcutta University over its affiliated colleges, has never been questioned. I am connected with one of the affiliated colleges, have been so for the last forty years, and I say this, and I think I echo Bengal feeling on the subject, that the effectiveness of the control is carried a little too far and that it is a trifle too meddlesome. We should like to have a little less of this control and a little more independence given to these colleges. Let us discuss another consideration. The schools are the feeders of the colleges and it is obvious that the institution which controls the colleges is best fitted to control the system of instruction which is to qualify for college education. I think, my Lord, that this is a truism so palpable that I need not further elaborate the point. I cannot disguise from myself the conviction that behind this all is the old, old plea of 'efficiency' about which Lord Morley has said that it had been carried a little too far in the administration of this country. Speaking from his place in Parliament, I think it was in connection with the Budget Debate of 1906, he observed 'our Government would be more popular if it was a little more elastic and a trifle less efficient.' But, my Lord, not only is there no justification for this proposal, but I venture to contend that the whole weight of argument is on the opposite side. Let

us examine the matter a little closely. When an application is submitted to the University for the recognition of a school it is forwarded to the Director of Public Instruction for report. The Education Department has thus the fullest opportunity of recording its views upon the application. But the final authority is the Senate. Now the Senate, like all public bodies, deliberates in public, decides in public, and, although largely official in its constitution and personnel, it decides with the aid of popular representatives. Nor is this all ; it decides on grounds that are purely educational. Now, my Lord, if this power were transferred to the Education Department, what would happen ? The Education Department, like all other Departments of Government—I am making no reflection upon any institution or body, I am merely stating the facts—would deliberate in secret, and without the aid of popular representatives. Further, what guarantee is there that its decisions will always be guided by educational considerations ? Every Government, whatever else it may be, is unquestionably a political organization, and every Department of Government, even that of pure study, partakes of a political flavour. What we fear is that if this power were transferred to the Education Department of the Local Government, in times of excitement the fate of our institutions would be determined by political, and, I was going to add, by police considerations. The past is a guide for the future. What has happened in the past may be repeated in the future. It is a matter of common knowledge that in the height of the excitement in Eastern Bengal some of our educational institutions escaped disaffiliation through the saving power of the Senate. The Brij Mohan College, one of the best insti-

tutions in Eastern Bengal, was recommended for disaffiliation by the Government of Eastern Bengal, chiefly on the report of the Criminal Investigation Department. The Senate appointed a Committee on which there were two European gentlemen, one of them now dead whose memory we honour, the late Mr. Cunningham. They visited the college, held a local inspection, and found that the report upon which the application for disaffiliation had been made was misleading or exaggerated in many essential points. The college was saved, and is now doing useful and splendid work. I submit, my Lord, that our alarm and anxiety in connection with this matter is one that is well founded.

It has been said that 'the man who pays the piper has the right to call for the tune.' This is an argument that has been adduced by a high official of the Bengal Government ; but it will not stand the test of scrutiny, so far as Bengal is concerned. It appears from the Administration Report that we have in Bengal 619 schools recognised by the University. Of these 619 only 63 are Government schools, the balance of over 550 are private institutions, managed, controlled and financed by our countrymen ; about one-half of them receive aid, the other half are entirely dependent on their own resources. Therefore, this argument of the tune and the piper does not apply to the conditions prevailing in our Province. But, my Lord, there is another aspect of the question which arises from the view which I have presented to the Council. In almost every district town we have a Government school and there are one and sometimes two competing schools controlled by private management. Between these there is often rivalry and jealousy. A local feeling and local bias is thus engendered ; the

local education authorities are infected by this feeling. It is these authorities, be it observed, who will report upon any application for the recognition of a school. Practically, therefore, it comes to this that you make over the decision of the question as to whether a particular school in any particular locality is to be recognised or not to the men who may have contracted a local bias against private enterprise in matters of education. At the present moment and under existing conditions the controlling superintendence of an independent body like the Senate nullifies the operation of personal and local bias.

Therefore, I venture to submit that it would be exceedingly risky to introduce an experiment of this kind in a province like Bengal, where the vast majority of the high schools are controlled by the people. They, at any rate, ought to have a predominant voice in the matter of the recognition of schools, and if they have not, the fact will operate as a set-back to educational progress. My Lord, what is it that has covered Bengal with her educational institutions? From the earliest period of our contact with our British rulers our people have evinced the most active interest in the spread of high English education. Our fathers founded the Hindu School in 1817, nearly a hundred years back, at a time when the Government had not entered the arena of high education, and only four years after the East India Company had budgeted the paltry and insignificant sum of £10,000 for the education of the whole province of Bengal. My Lord, it was at the instance of the great Raja Ram Mohan Roy that Dr. Duff, the prince of Indian missionaries and the prince of Indian educationists, came over to Bengal and established the Free Church College, now known as the

Scottish Churches College. My Lord, it is trust that has covered Bengal with her educational institutions: Mistrust, or the semblance of a policy involving an abatement of the confidence which has hitherto been reposed in the people, will be disastrous to the cause of education in Bengal and in other parts of India. It will not add to the number of schools : it will restrict the educational area and may even nullify the gracious message of our august Sovereign. But I have no fears, no doubts, no misgivings. I am confident that this proposal will not be extended to Bengal and I am fortified in that confidence by the terms of the resolution of the Government itself. The resolution says— ' Each province' (I am repeating the exact words) ' has its own educational system. It has grown up under its local conditions and is' (very significant words) ' a part of its general well-being.' Then the resolution adds, ' The Government of India have no desire to enforce a uniform system amid divergent conditions.' That, my Lord, is my appeal. We are proud of our local institutions, our local environments, our local traditions. We have been nurtured in them, we have grown up with their growth. We have grown up, if not to the full height of our educational stature—which, perhaps, is a matter of future accomplishment—at any rate to our present stage of educational progress under the happy operation of local conditions and environments in the creation of which the Government has had a supreme hand. We love them, we cherish them with affectionate regard : they are a part and parcel of our very being. They are bound up with our happiness and contentment. It is now proposed, my Lord, to revise them, to *modify* them, indeed, to revolutionize them.

His Excellency the President said :—" I would ask the Hon'ble Member to conclude. I have already given him more than 40 minutes, so he must conclude at once please."

The Hon'ble Mr. Banerjee said :—I will, My Lord.

We of the East abhor great and sudden changes, whether in education or in Government, with all the warmth of our oriental natures. We are advocates of steady, normal, natural expansion, according to our requirements and the growth of an advancing public opinion. Public opinion in India, in Bengal, the opinion of a united community, of Hindus and Mahomedans alike, is arrayed in strenuous opposition to this proposal.

My Lord, we have had enough of contention, of controversy, of agitation : we want peace ; we pray for peace. Give us peace, My Lord, by suspending, at any rate for the present, the application of this proposal to the province of Bengal. If public opinion in its subsequent developments supports it, there will be time enough to try the experiment, and then, My Lord, it will be tried with the full moral support of the people of Bengal and under conditions which will conduce to its success. Such an experiment, so tried, will add another link to the golden chain of sympathy which Your Excellency's Government has been forging for the people of India, and it will afford another striking illustration of the policy of conciliation and co-operation with which Your Excellency's honoured name will always be imperishably associated in the pages of Indian history. In the meantime, My Lord, let us be permitted to walk in the old ways where our footsteps have been so sure, so safe, and so steady, and where on the

whole the results achieved have been so triumphantly successful. That, My Lord, is our appeal to Your Excellency's Government, on behalf of the people of Bengal, whose interests in association with my colleagues I represent in this Council, and I am sure I do not make that appeal in vain.

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## THE PRESS ACT.

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*[In moving the Resolution for amending the Press Act at a meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council at Delhi on January 9, 1914, the Hon. Babu Surendranath Banerjea said :—]*

Sir, my Resolution refers to the Press Act of 1910 known as Act I of that year. I have no desire to revive the memories of a controversy now passed and I hope forgotten, but it is useless to disguise the fact that the Bill was passed amid some opposition in this Council and considerable opposition in the country. Reading through the reports of the debate which took place in February, 1910, I find that there was a general desire evinced by the non-official Indian Members that it should be a temporary measure and should not find a place among the permanent statutes of the land. That view, however, did not commend itself to the majority and the Act has been added to the stock of our permanent legislation. Sir, the Act has now been in operation for a period close upon four years, and we are in a position to judge of its character. How it has worked, what are its defects and how they may be remedied—these seem to me, Sir, to be pertinent and relevant issues. They force upon our minds the conviction that the Act should be repealed, or, at any rate, should be modified, and that, if it is to be modified, it should be at least upon the lines of the suggestions contained in my Resolution. That, Sir, represents what I

may describe as the 'irreducible minimum' which the opinion of the educated community demands, as the first definite step towards what they hope will lead to the final annulment of this Act. Sir, that this Act is bound to be repealed sooner or later—sooner I hope than later—is as clear as the noon-day sun; for it is inconsistent with the great traditions of British rule and those noble principles of government which are incarnated in British administration. No concession to popular freedom has been made by the British Government in India which has ever been withdrawn. The Jury Notification was cancelled; the Vernacular Press Act was repealed; and so will it be with this Act in the fulness of time. I submit, Sir, that the Government of India, standing at the head of the nation, becoming every day more and more nationalistic in its views by the breadth and liberality of its policy, ought to show us the way. Sir, the Act gives very large powers to the police. Under the provisions of section 8 of the Act, the magistrate is empowered to ask the publisher or printer of a newspaper, when he applies for registration, to find security. This power is exercised practically by the police. The magistrate in this case is the police and the police is the Criminal Investigation Department. Only the other day, in the case of the *Habul Matin*, a Persian journal published in Calcutta, it was not the Local Government but the magistrate which demanded security at the instance of the Commissioner of Police. That surely was not the intention of the original framers of the Act. The interposition of the magistrate meant the exercise of judicial discretion and was intended to be a safeguard against the aberrations of executive authority.

One of the greatest anomalies of the Act is that whereas a right is given to the aggrieved party to make an appeal against an order of forfeiture, no such right is allowed when the order for deposit of security is given, and the High Court has recently held in the case to which I have referred that even its revisional powers are not available in a case of this kind. Sir, thus in the absence of any safeguard of this kind, the result has been that many newspapers which were called upon to find security have ceased publication. I hold in my hand a statement giving the names of some of the newspapers thus dealt with. I find that 17 newspapers were asked to give security. Of these 3 were Hindu papers and 14 Muhammadan; and not having been able to give security, they all ceased publication. The case of one of these papers, the *Akh Hadis* of Amritsar, is very peculiar. It published a letter replying to certain strictures which had appeared in a Missionary organ reflecting upon the Muhammadan faith. This newspaper was asked to furnish security, but it does not appear that the book which published the strictures upon the Muhammadan faith was at all taken notice of. Then, Sir, passing from the papers which ceased to exist, we have a number of those which gave the security. The number according to the list which I have in my hand is 15—9 Muhammadan, 4 Hindu, 1 Sikh and 1 Anglo-Indian. The case of the *Zamindar* of Lahore calls for notice. It has been required to give security to the extent of Rs. 10,000. The head and front of its offence was that it protested against the removal of a mosque. The justice of the complaint was admitted; the mosque was restored; but in consequence of certain remarks which it made against the

respected head of the Government of the United Provinces, the paper was asked to give a security of Rs. 10,000. I will say this at once, that I have seen these remarks ; I deplore them ; I consider them to be very discourteous, very disrespectful, very objectionable ; but at the same time, it seems to me that it would have been quite worthy of a great Government, if, instead of demanding security to the extent of Rs. 10,000, the Editor was sent for and sharply reprimanded. There is one other case to which I want to refer. Amongst those that were required to give security, there was an Anglo-Indian newspaper named the *Cawnpore Herald*. Somewhere about the year 1912 an article called 'A Dramatic Scene' appeared in that paper. The Deputy Superintendent of Police called upon the proprietress of the paper, and wanted to know who the writer was. Naturally enough, she declined to give the name. Then she called on the magistrate ; the magistrate said that it was very improper on her part to permit her newspaper to be the means of criticism directed against the police and the municipality, and that she had no business to have the press moved about from place to place. The upshot of it all was that she was required to find security to the extent of Rs. 500. She submitted a memorial to the Government of India somewhere about the year 1912. My information is that up to this time, she has not received any reply of any kind.

Passing from these cases, let me note the vigour with which the Act has been worked under the different Governments. Through the courtesy of my hon'ble friend, the Home Secretary, I have been furnished with a statement. I find from it that for the three years during which the Act has been in operation, there have

been 807 cases altogether dealt with under the Act. Of these, 239 were cases under sections 3 and 8, in which deposit of security was required ; and the other cases were under section 12, in which certain publications and pamphlets were declared to be forfeited. If we take the figure 807 for three years, it comes to this, that there was an action taken almost every day of the year. This seems to me to indicate very great vigour on the part of the different departments superintending the operation of this Act. All this indicates the urgent need there is for the supervision of public opinion over the operation of this Act.

Passing from facts, let me come to the authoritative expression of opinion. I will not refer to the popular verdict, for that may not commend itself to gentlemen on the other side of the House ; but I will cite an authority of unquestioned weight, whose pronouncement, I am sure, will command the implicit acquiescence of all members, be they official or non-official. Let me quote the opinion of the Chief Justice of the High Court of Bengal when delivering judgment in the *Comrade* case. This is what Sir Lawrence Jenkins said :—

‘ The provisions of section 4 are very comprehensive, and its language is as wide as human ingenuity could make it. Indeed, it appears to me to embrace the whole range of varying degrees of assurance from certainty on the one side to the very limits of impossibility on the other. It is difficult to see to what lengths the operation of this section may not plausibly be extended by an ingenious mind. They would certainly extend to writings that may even command approval. An attack on that degraded section of the public which lives on the misery and shame of others would come within this widespread net, the praise of a class might not be free from the risk. Much that is regarded as standard literature could undoubtedly be caught.’

That is the Chief Justice's opinion about section 4 of the Act. Sir, my Resolution does not cover it at all. It is a very modest one. I ask, is it possible to conceive of a condemnation of any measure more restrained in its tone yet more emphatic in its reference? A law so dangerously comprehensive in its scope naturally needs many safeguards for its proper working. The Government of India recognised the necessity of such safeguards and wisely provided them. The Hon'ble Mr. Sinha, late Law Member to the Government of India, speaking from his place in this Council, speaking on behalf of the Government of India, referred to these safeguards in clear and explicit terms. I will read an extract from his speech. He said :—

'It is of no use to attempt to convince us that it is a very drastic measure, because we have put in all kinds of safeguards. I will mention another which my Hon'ble friends seem to have forgotten in their hasty perusal of the Bill. When the Local Government makes the order of forfeiture the Bill provides that it must state or describe the offending words, or articles, or pictures, or engravings, or whatever it is, upon which it bases its order. No making an order which is vague, which is indefinite. No order without allowing the man to know what he is being punished for, but a definite order stating the very words of the article or describing it as that which the man is being punished for. Is that not a safeguard? Apart from the Tribunal of Appeal, is it not a safeguard to provide that a man will not have his security forfeited without being told exactly what he has written that is taken exception to.'

I think, Sir, there could not be a clearer exposition of the intentions of the Government in regard to this matter, and I understand that Mr. Sinha's speech on that occasion was endorsed whole-heartedly by the then Viceroy, Lord Minto. The question is whether these safeguards have been effectually provided, whether the

promises then made have been redeemed. Let us examine the matter a little. Section 4 of the Act lays down that when a Local Government has decided to forfeit any deposit in respect of a printing press, it has to issue a notice in writing stating the grounds of the forfeiture—the words, signs, visible representations, to which exception is taken. Section 6 lays down that when a deposit has been forfeited and a fresh deposit has been made and the Government decides again to forfeit the deposit in consequence of the contravention of the terms of section 4, a notice is to be issued in writing again stating the grounds for the forfeiture. This is as regards printing presses. The same provisions *mutatis mutandis* apply to newspapers. Therefore it comes to this, that wherever a Local Government is invested with the right to forfeit a newspaper or a printing press, the obligation is cast on the Government to state the grounds for the forfeiture. But, Sir, unfortunately, all this is annulled by the provisions of section 22 ; that at any rate is the opinion of the High Court. It is necessary for me to read section 22. That section declares :—

‘ Every declaration of forfeiture purporting to be made under this Act shall, as against all persons, be conclusive evidence that the forfeiture therein referred to has taken place, and no proceeding purporting to be taken under this Act shall be called in question by any Court, except the High Court on such application as aforesaid, and no civil or criminal proceeding, except as provided by this Act, shall be instituted against any person for anything done or in good faith intended to be done under this Act.’

This is the opinion of the Chief Justice in regard to this section :—

‘ The notification therefore appears to me to be defective in a material particular and, but for section 22 of the Act, it would

in my opinion, be our duty to hold that there had been no legal forfeiture.

'That section, however, provides that every declaration purporting to be made under this Act, shall, as against all persons, be conclusive evidence that the forfeiture therein referred to has taken place. The result is that though I hold that the notification does not comply with the provisions of the Act, still we are, in my opinion, barred from questioning the legality of the forfeiture it purports to declare.'

Is it possible to hold in the face of this clear expression of opinion that the safeguards which were promised by the Hon'ble Mr. Sinha have been provided? Be it observed that these pledges were given in order to allay the great public excitement that was caused by the enactment of so drastic a law as the Press Act. What was given with the one hand is practically taken away with the other. This was not, this could not have been, the intention of the Government of India, for apart from its high-mindedness, and even its sternest critics must give it credit for that, there is internal evidence to show the anxiety of the Government of India to incorporate in the Act the declaration of Mr. Sinha; and section after section reproduces the safeguards promised by him. But all of a sudden they are nullified by the provisions of section 22. It seems to me that there must have been some error, some mistake in the drafting. I am confirmed in this view by an examination of the Act. Section 17 gives the aggrieved party a right of appeal to the High Court; that however becomes nugatory and meaningless if the aggrieved party is not furnished with materials on which the High Court is to form its judgment, or the High Court is barred from considering these materials for the purposes of reviewing the decision of the executive authority concerned. It is



preposterous to suppose that the Act deliberately nullifies in one part what it has deliberately conceded in another, or that it has thrown an impossible burden of proof upon the aggrieved party. I will quote the opinion of the Hon'ble the Chief Justice :—

'The Advocate-General has admitted, and I think very properly, that the pamphlet (that is the 'Comrade') is not seditious and does not offend against any provision of the Criminal Law of India. But he has contended, and rightly in my opinion, that the provisions of the Press Act extend far beyond the Criminal Law ; and he has argued that the burden of proof is cast on the applicant, so that, however meritorious the pamphlet may be, still, if the applicant cannot establish the negative the Act requires, his application must fail.'

'And what is this negative ? It is not enough for the applicant to show that the words of the pamphlet are not likely to bring into hatred or contempt any class or section of His Majesty's subjects in British India, or that they have not a tendency in fact to bring about that result. But he must go further, and show that it is impossible for them to have that tendency either directly or indirectly, and whether by way of inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor or implication.'

Well, Sir, it is impossible for any person to prove a negative, and the difficulty of the task is enhanced by the comprehensive nature of the obligation of proof that is cast upon him.

The second part of my Resolution follows as a matter of course from the first. It is no use placing materials before the High Court for a review, if the High Court is debarred from considering these materials. The High Court says that it is debarred. Therefore I submit that section 22 ought to be amended in order definitely to empower the High Court to set aside any order not made in conformity with the provisions of sections 4, 6, 9, 11 and 12. It may perhaps be held that the first portion of

the Resolution is a surplusage, that it is already the law, and that therefore no amendment is necessary. If this contention holds good, it constitutes an overwhelming argument in favour of the amendment of section 22 in accordance with my suggestion. If it is already provided in the Act that the grounds of the forfeiture must be set forth in the notes of forfeiture, you are bound to make the law operative and to give it effect. Therefore you must modify section 22 upon the lines suggested by me.

Sir, it is admitted on all hands that there has been a sensible improvement in the situation; the highest authorities in the realm have borne testimony to this effect. It is also admitted that there has been a change for the better in the tone and temper of the press. Our critics hostile to our interests and aspirations have ungrudgingly admitted the fact; that being so, I feel that I should be justified in demanding the repeal or, at any rate, a substantial modification of the Act, but I go no further than to invite the Council so to amend the Act as to remove a just cause for complaint, to carry out its declared intentions and to redeem the pledged word of the Government. In making this appeal I speak not only as a Member of this Council but as one with whom journalism has been the cherished vocation of his life. We journalists feel as if the sword of Damocles was hanging over our heads. We may be right or we may be wrong, but that is our feeling. Ours is a noble calling and we are entitled to the whole-hearted support and sympathy of the Government. The newspaper press is the great organ for the ventilation of popular grievances, it is the safety-valve of the State, it is an instrument of popular and political education, it is the gift of British rule and we cherish it with affectionate

ardour. Its liberty may degenerate into license, but I venture to hold that the arm of the law, such as it is without being reinforced by the Press Act, is long enough to reach it and strong enough to deal with it. The amendment of the Press Act which I pray for—and after all it is not an amendment but is in entire conformity with the intentions of the framers of the Act—will, if accepted, go some way to soften the rigours of the law and remove a just source of anxiety and of uneasiness felt by the great body of Indian journalists, and above all, Sir, it will proclaim to the world the unalterable determination of the Government to redeem its pledged word and to make justice to the aggrieved party the keynote of its policy, even when enforcing a measure of some severity, deemed necessary by the Government in the supreme interests of the State.

With these words, Sir, I beg to move the Resolution that stands against my name, namely :—

That this Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council that an amendment of the Press Act of 1910 be introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council so as to provide that when any order of forfeiture is made under the Act, the order must state or describe the offending words or articles or pictures or engravings or whatever it is upon which the Local Government bases its order, and that section 22 of the Act be so modified as to definitely empower the High Court to set aside an order of forfeiture not made in conformity with the provisions of sections 4, 6, 9, 11 and 12 of the Act.

*[At the close of the discussion before the Council divided on the motion, Babu Surendranath said :—]*

Sir, I will not, at this hour, take up many minutes—especially in view of the criticisms which have already been offered by my Hon'ble friends over there on the

speech of the Hon'ble the Home Member and of the Hon'ble the Advocate-General. Sir, it is abundantly clear from the discussion that has taken place, that, barring one exception, of course, there is a general consensus of opinion as regards the course that should be followed in connection with the Press Act. I think we are all on this side of the House agreed that if there are safeguards provided in the law, those safeguards are inoperative and that they should be made effective. I am sorry that there was a disposition on the part of the Hon'ble the Home Member to go back upon the declarations of the past and discard the safeguards provided in the law itself. For the Hon'ble the Home Member observed that there was a danger in publicity. I am afraid it is too late to make that complaint at this hour. Section after section explicitly says that where notice of forfeiture is issued the grounds should be *stated*. I hope the Government of India and the various Local Governments will give effect to this part of the law, such as that law is. We were expecting some kind of assurance from the Hon'ble the Home Member that in future when a notice of forfeiture was issued the notice would contain the grounds—would contain a statement of the words, signs or visible representations as indicated in the law. I must confess to a sense of disappointment that an assurance to that effect was not forthcoming.

But the Hon'ble the Home Member must have been convinced of the trend of public opinion as regards this matter. There is practically unanimity in our ranks, amongst the non-official Indian Members, that the law should be amended, so as to render operative the safeguards which have been provided ; and if on this

occasion there is to be an adverse vote, as I fear there is likely to be, I feel that the Council have not heard the last of this matter ; because there is a body of public opinion in favour of an amendment of this Act, and we, as representatives of the public voicing the public sentiment, will feel it our duty to give expression to that sentiment within the walls of this Chamber. Whatever may be the outcome of this debate, I am sure, I fear, that the matter will have to be brought before this Council again.

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## THE DECENTRALIZATION COMMISSION.

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*[In moving the Resolution re : recommendations of Decentralization Commission with regard to Municipalities, at a meeting of the Viceregal Council held on March 18, 1914, Babu Surendranath Banerjee said :—]*

Sir, I have the honour to move the Resolution which stands against my name, namely :—

“ That this Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council the adoption of the following recommendations of the Decentralization Commission, namely :—

(a) that subject to the maintenance of prescribed minimum balances, municipalities should have a free hand in respect of their budgets ;

(b) that Municipal Councils should usually elect their own Chairmen ;

(c) that District Boards should contain an elective majority chosen by the non-official members of the Sub-District Boards ;

(d) that village *panchayats* should be formed where local circumstances and experience permit with power to carry out projects regarding village sanitation, village schools and minor village works.”

My Resolution covers a wide surface of our system of local self-government. Ever since the days of Lord Ripon the encouragement of local self-government has been a prominent feature of the administrative policy of the Government of India. In one of his earliest utterances Lord Ripon, whose memory we the people of India cherish with affectionate gratitude, declared that he had it in charge from Her Gracious Majesty, the late Queen Victoria, to foster the growth of local self-govern-

ment in India. This message was followed by the Resolution of the 18th May, 1882, which authoritatively laid down the principles of local self-government, and which we regard as our Magna Charta in that matter. Lord Morley, in his despatch of the 27th November, 1908, endorsed the principles of this Resolution. He regards local self-government as an integral part of his scheme of constitutional reform, which he thinks ought to be presented as a whole ; and he urges the Government of India to adopt speedy measures for the effectual advancement of local self-government. With your permission, Sir, I will quote an extract from the despatch of the 27th November, 1908. 'It is desirable,' says Lord Morley, 'to present our reformed constitutional system as a whole,' and he adds, 'from this point of view, it is necessary to attempt without delay an effectual advance in the direction of local self-government.' All that my Resolution seeks to bring about is an effectual and speedy advance of local self-government. Sir, I am confident of the sympathy and support of the Government of India in this matter : for His Excellency the Viceroy was pleased to say the other day, the 23rd December last, in reply to an address that was presented to him by the Corporation of Calcutta, that it was the earnest desire of the Government of India to advance the cause of local self-government, wherever possible.

Sir, the first part of my Resolution recommends that municipalities should be permitted a free hand in framing their budgets, subject to the maintenance of a prescribed minimum balance. This free hand they have not at present. Let me explain, Sir, the law and the practice, as the law and practice are in Bengal, and I

presume that the law and practice, having regard to the considerations to which I shall presently refer, cannot in other provinces be materially different. In our province in the month of February, the Commissioners, at a meeting held for the purpose, frame and adopt their budget. The estimates are then forwarded to the magistrate of the district. The magistrate of the district with his remarks sends back the estimates to the Commissioners or forwards them to the Commissioner of the division. The Commissioner of the division either sanctions the estimates or makes his remarks and sends them back to the Commissioners for consideration. Sir, the suggestions of the Commissioner of the division are in the nature of mandatory instructions. The Municipal Commissioners are bound to carry them out. That is the law on the subject. My complaint is that this control of the Commissioner of the division extends to the minutest details of municipal administration. The Municipal Commissioners cannot add a rupee to the pay of a clerk, or even of a peon, without his sanction ; and I know of instances where such increments have been disallowed. Sir, the power of the purse is the test of all real power ; and where it exists in name or under sufferance, there can be no sense of responsibility. We have heard a great deal about the apathy of our ratepayers ; but how can the ratepayers feel a living interest in their municipal affairs when they see that their representatives are thus treated in the supreme and crucial matter of finance. Our Conferences and our Congresses have again and again called attention to this matter and have addressed the Government to relax the rigours of executive control ; but all in vain. It was not until the Decentralization Commission had



come to our rescue that the Government of Bengal felt itself called upon to move. On the 20th April, 1910, in the time of Sir Edward Baker, a circular letter was issued over the signature of the Hon'ble Mr. Wheeler, who was then our Financial Secretary, giving a free hand to four municipalities, subject to certain restrictions to which I shall presently refer. These restrictions were that they should maintain a prescribed minimum balance, that they should make adequate provision for the service of loans, and lastly that they should observe the Act and the rules and regulations of the Government. These are perfectly reasonable conditions. The municipalities thus exempted from the rigours of executive control were the four biggest municipalities in the province—with the exception of the Corporation of Calcutta—each having an annual income of over a lakh of rupees. This circular letter indeed went a little beyond the concerns of these municipalities. It laid down the general principles subject to which Commissioners of divisions were to exercise their control. Sir, with your permission, I will read an extract from that circular letter :—

While it is only in the four municipalities specified that the Lieutenant-Governor is at present prepared to dispense with the supervision of the budget now enforced by the District Magistrate and Commissioner, it should be recognised generally with reference to all municipalities that, so far as possible, interference with details should be avoided ; the three important points to be scrutinised in connection with the budget are enumerated above. Otherwise, Commissioners, when examining municipal budgets, should endeavour rather to guide the municipalities concerned by friendly advice than to control their discretion by explicit direction to take or forbear from particular action ; municipalities should be made to recognise that they are primarily responsible for the efficient and economical administration of their finances.

and if they misuse the discretion vested in them, they must bear the result of their own mistake.

Well, Sir, this was a circular letter issued in 1910. I was chairman of a suburban municipality in 1910. I am chairman of the same municipality in 1914. I find no improvement in my position. It is just as good, or just as bad now, as it was then. The control is as minute, as searching, as all-embracing now, as it was in 1910. What then is to be the solution? Well, Sir, I venture to submit that all the municipalities in Bengal should be placed upon one and the same footing with these four municipalities, and that the recommendation of the Decentralization Commission in regard to municipalities should in this respect be given effect to.

If Government should hesitate to take what may appear perhaps to some to be a big jump into the unknown, I venture to suggest a compromise, namely, that the municipalities having an income of Rs. 10,000 a year may be exempted. I think such a measure would be on the lines of Sir Edward Baker's policy, it would be in conformity with the spirit of the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission, and would represent a further advance in the direction of local self-government. Sir, my remarks apply primarily to Bengal, but I venture to submit that the condition of other municipalities in other provinces is very much the same, if not worse. Therefore, these remarks apply equally to municipalities in other parts of India.

Now, Sir, I come to the second part of my Resolution, namely, that Municipal Councils should elect their own chairmen. I take my stand upon the great Resolution of 18th May, 1882, which says that whatever official control is to be exercised over local bodies should

be exercised from without rather than from within. Lord Morley, in the despatch to which I have referred, thoroughly endorses this principle ; and, indeed, he goes a step further. He says that the partial non-success of the system of local self-government in India is largely due to a departure from this which he regards as the true and vital principle of local self-government, and he invites the Government of India to affirm the principle and actively shape its policy in accordance with it. I will read an extract from Lord Morley's despatch. He says :—

If Local Self-Government has so far been no marked success as a training ground, it is mainly for the reason that the constitution of the local bodies departed from what was affirmed in the Resolution to be the true principle that the control should be exercised from without rather than from within. The Government should revise and check the acts of local bodies, but not dictate them. I have no doubt that the Government of India to-day will affirm and actively shape their policy upon the principle authoritatively set forth by their predecessors in 1882.

That, Sir, is what I urged, namely, that the Government should affirm and actively shape their policy in accordance with the principles laid down by their predecessors. Sir, what is the state of things to-day ? Here is the true, vital principle of local self-government laid down in the Resolution of the 18th May, 1882, supported by the high authority of Lord Morley. Why not apply that principle to the present situation ? In reply to a question which I had the honour of putting yesterday, the Department over which you preside so worthily has kindly placed at my disposal a statement, a most interesting statement, throwing a flood of light upon the development of local self-government. It appears from that statement that there are 526 municipi-

palities in all India. Of these 198 municipalities have chairmen appointed by the Government, that is to say, they do not elect their chairmen. I ask the Council to deduct 111 municipalities in Bengal from this figure, for the reason that I shall refer to the Bengal municipalities later on ; for the present I hope the Council will have sufficient confidence in me to permit me to make this deduction. Therefore, we have a balance of 415 municipalities outside Bengal. Of these, 178 municipalities have chairmen appointed by Government, deduct 14 municipalities ; because, although they have the right to elect their chairmen, they have not exercised that right: therefore, these municipalities should be deleted. Then we have these figures, out of 415 municipalities outside Bengal, 164 have chairmen appointed by Government—a departure from the principles laid down in the Resolution of 1882 and from the despatch of Lord Morley. In other words, Sir, after 30 years of local self-government, we have 39 per cent. of the municipalities all over India, except Bengal, whose chairmen are appointed by Government. I think this is a situation which calls for immediate remedy. As far as Bengal is concerned, the situation is better, thanks to the statesmanship of a distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service, Mr. Herbert Reynolds. He is now in England, living in retirement ; and the blessings of a grateful people follow him ; he was the author of our municipal system. In Bengal, out of 111 municipalities, only 20 have their chairmen appointed by Government. In other words, whereas in the rest of India you have 39 per cent. of the municipalities whose chairmen are nominated by Government, in Bengal there are only 18 per cent. whose chairmen are appointed by Government. Nor is this all. I

want to make a stand for my province and show that in this matter its policy is liberal to a degree, and should be extended to other parts of India. These 20 municipalities are included in the second schedule of the Act—we call it the black list. The Municipal Law in Bengal is so liberal that a municipality may be withdrawn from the schedule, but none can be added to it. Furthermore, when a municipality which has the right to elect its chairman desires to forego that right and abandon its constitutional privilege, it can only do so, not indeed by a bare majority but by the vote of two-thirds of the entire body of Commissioners. It seems to me that there is no occasion for keeping this schedule at all, when the Government has such ample powers of the control from without, even to the extent of suppressing a municipality. There is, therefore, no necessity for exercising its power from within by appointing a chairman. Sir, if there is to be an advance in this direction in respect of Bengal, *a fortiori* there should be an advance in respect of other parts of India.

I now come to the third branch of my subject, namely, that District Boards should contain an elective majority chosen by the non-official members of the Sub-District Boards. This is a recommendation of the Decentralization Commission. There are 198 District Boards in India, having 5,013 members, of these 2,836 are nominated, in other words, less than half. Thus we have a majority of nominated and not of elected members, contrary to the recommendation of the Decentralization Commission and to Lord Morley's despatch. Lord Morley says (I am not quoting the words, I have them here, I will reproduce them from memory) that non-official members of Local Boards must be made to

feel that they have real powers and real responsibilities to discharge. What I want to ask is how can they feel that they have real powers and have real responsibilities to discharge, when they are in a standing minority in these District Boards, under the presidency of the omnipotent head of the district.

Now I come to the last branch of my Resolution, namely, that village *panchayats* should be formed where local circumstances and experience permit, with power to carry out projects regarding village sanitation, village schools and minor village works.

Here again, Sir, I rely upon the authority of Lord Morley, who invites the Government of India to take active measures for the organization of these village unions. He says :—

I desire Your Excellency in Council to consider the best way of carrying out a policy which would make the village the starting point of public life.

According to the same authority the village is the fundamental, the indestructible unit of the Indian Social System, which has survived the overthrow of dynasties and the fall of empires. Sir, our village organizations carry the mind back to the dawn of human civilization and the early beginning of local self-government. They are dead now, but the instinct is there, deep down in the national consciousness, and under the fostering care of a wise and beneficent Government, such as we now have, it may be revived into a living flame. Our system of local self-government has been built up from the top. That, perhaps, was inevitable under the circumstances. But the time has now come when it should be strengthened from below and the foundations laid well and deep. I cannot help making the

remark, Sir, that there has been a lack of enthusiasm, both popular and official, in the matter of these village organizations. Why, in India there are only 454 village unions, Madras carries off the palm in this matter with 393 village unions ; Bengal comes second—a bad second, I am sorry to say—we have 56 village unions, and the other provinces, Bihar and Orissa, divide the rest. I think, Sir, the law should be revised. The power of these village organizations is limited, their funds are scanty. In Bengal, under the Cattle Trespass Act, they get the proceeds of the pounds supplemented by the doles of the Local Boards. Well, Sir, I have no hesitation in saying that village sanitation will not thrive and primary education must fail of its purpose, if the villagers do not co-operate; for after all the nation dwells in the cottage and no surer basis of national prosperity can be laid than in the association of the residents of our villages in the great task of education and sanitation.

You, Sir, were pleased to observe the other day that the Government would soon issue a Resolution on local self-government. We desire that the Government should know our views before this Resolution is recorded. I hope and trust the trend of this discussion will place the Government in possession of the sense of the educated community as voiced by their representatives. Sir, the Government has evinced the most lively concern in the advancement of education. Local self-government, rightly understood, is a part of our education. Lord Ripon regarded it as an instrument of popular and political education, and the Government of India have recognised the close inter-dependence that exists between them by placing the two departments under the control and guidance of the same Minister. Education

is the hand-maid of local self-government ; local self-government is the ally of education. They strengthen each other and help each other by their mutual interaction. I take it that the Government is most anxious to educate us in Western ideals, and not only in Western ideals, but in those practical activities which have their roots in those ideals. If I am right, I submit that a simultaneous advance in respect of education and local self-government is called for, and the first essential condition is that the leading strings should be relaxed, if not completely done away with; that a larger measure of independence, greater opportunities of initiative and self-reliance, should be accorded to the local bodies. I am sure, Sir, trust will beget trust, kindle a new sense of responsibility and justify the great boon which is associated with the honoured memory of one of the most loved, and one of the most illustrious, of Indian Viceroy's. When two such authorities as Lord Morley and the Decentralization Commission call for an advance, I submit that the Government of India cannot stand still. Our goal, that of the Government and the people, is the same ; we are journeying both towards the same destined end. If there is any difference of opinion, it is about the pace. We want the Government to quicken its pace, to move faster : a very significant request coming from an Eastern people. The East is indeed slow to move, but when it does move, it moves with all the passionate, but restrained and reasoned, fervour of the Orient.

With these remarks I beg to move this Resolution.

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## THE DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT.

*[Speaking on the Hon. Sir Reginald Craddock's Criminal Law Amendment Bill on the 18th March 1915, in the Imperial Council, Babu Surendranath Banerjea observed:—]*

My Lord, I have listened with attention, I may add with respectful attention, to the speech of the Hon'ble Member in charge of this Bill and to the speeches that subsequently followed, including the lecture which my Hon'ble friend to the left\* read to our public men who are members of this Council. I will say this that I am not convinced as regards several of the provisions in the Bill, which to my mind do not seem to be justified by the exigencies of the country or by naval and military considerations. My Lord, we have been told, and I accept the statement in an unqualified form, we have been told that the situation in the Punjab is grave and the situation in Bengal also is serious, though perhaps not to the same extent. The object of the Bill is to improve the situation. The end is one which will commend itself to all, no matter to what school of politics he may belong, for we know that order—stable order—is the fundamental condition of all real progress. But when we come to consider the means to be devised for the purpose of attaining this object differences of opinion arise. My Lord, I say at once that so far as the provisions of the Bill are concerned arising out of the war and relating to naval and military considerations, it is the duty of every patriotic Indian to accord to them

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\* The Hon'ble Mr. Ghuznavi.

his whole-hearted support, and I am sure that this will be the sense of the country.

But, My Lord, the Bill traverses ground beyond military and naval considerations, raises issues of a highly controversial character in regard to which many of us will not be able to see eye to eye with the Government. It has been stated by the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Bill that it is framed upon the English Act. Well, in many respects it traverses beyond the English Act, and I will mention one or two points. I am not considering the sections in detail, but section 2 creates an offence which is not to be found anywhere in the English Act, namely, promoting feelings of enmity and hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects. That is altogether new in this Bill ; it is nowhere to be found in the English Act, and I think the Hon'ble Member in charge recognises the fact.

Then, My Lord, there is section 3 which creates a particular tribunal and lays down specifically the offences which are to be tried by that tribunal.

My Hon'ble friend in charge of the Bill has said that the tribunal in England is the Court martial : here the tribunal is to be a Commission to be constituted by the Local Government. Undoubtedly the provisions of the English Act as regards this matter are far more drastic than the provisions of the Bill that is before us. But, My Lord, an amendment was moved in the House of Lords the other day—and I believe the underlying principle of it was accepted by the Lord Chancellor and the Government,—under the terms of which, when members of the civil population would be affected, they would have the right of claiming trial by a Civil Court and by a jury. But what I desire to point out is this, that

it is only specific offences that are covered by the English Act, whereas we have a large number of offences under the head of Public Safety included in the Indian Penal Code which find a place here and which are to be tried in a summary fashion by a specially constituted tribunal.

Therefore, My Lord, the contention that this Bill is framed upon the basis and the model of the English Act is only correct in a qualified sense. It is far more comprehensive than the English Act, and because it is so, I fear there will be a great deal of agitation and controversy in the country regarding its provisions.

My Lord, reference has been made to the growth of anarchism in Bengal, to the recrudescence of crimes of violence in our province. My Lord, we, the educated community of Bengal and the leaders of the moderate party, hold anarchism in absolute horror and detestation, and we are doing what we can to put it down so far as it lies in our power. On the 13th of this month we held a Conference in the rooms of the British Indian Association, presided over by the Maharajah of Burdwan and attended by many men of light and leading, including a European gentleman who is the Principal of an important College in Calcutta. My Lord, it was the unanimous sense of that Conference that restrictive measures would not be suitable, and that they would aggravate the situation. My Lord, that is the deliberate judgment of the people of Bengal. We feel that the effect of restrictive measures in Bengal would be to add to the uneasiness of the community and perhaps help the breakers of the law, who would welcome them. What is needed is not new legislation, but greater efficiency in the police. I freely admit that the efficiency of the

police has been added to and improved in recent years, but a great deal more remains to be done. My Lord, it is the immunity of the offenders and the helplessness of the community who are defenceless and unarmed, that encourage these breakers of the law in the perpetration of their foul deeds. I may remind the Members of this Council that there was a formidable conspiracy soon after the outbreak of Fenianism in London, the object of which was to blow up the public buildings with dynamite. In one year's time the London police shadowed every conspirator, hunted down the gang, and the country was purged of the scourge. Of course I know India is not England, but still, what we feel is that if the Government is to deal with the outward symptoms of these unhappy developments, the efficiency of the police has to be greatly improved. With regard to the root causes, my Lord, they have to be dealt with in that spirit of conciliatory statesmanship for which Your Excellency's Government has obtained a name and fame.

My Lord, I feel that in this matter the Government should have proceeded by Ordinance. Your Excellency was pleased to refer to this matter in the course of your speech. We of course bow to Your Excellency's decision, but what some of us felt, what I at least felt, was this, that in this matter the Government could not admit us into their fullest confidence, that they could not perhaps disclose to us, in all their details, the information upon which their judgment was based, and that, therefore, it was impossible for us to record an intelligent vote. That being so, I felt that it was the clear duty of the Government to have assumed the entire responsibility of these measures by issuing an

Ordinance. However that may be, my Lord, we are grateful to Your Excellency for the assurance which Your Excellency has given us to-day, that the crimes of a few fanatics, and this law which Your Excellency's Government thinks necessary to enact for their prevention, will not be regarded as a slur upon our loyalty. I hope and trust that this measure will in practical operation be administered with moderation and self-restraint. *I hope and trust that it will not be a weapon in the hands of the enemies of Indian advancement for the purpose of blasting those prospects and frustrating those hopes which have been roused in our hearts by the loyal devotion of our countrymen consecrated by their blood on the battle-fields of Europe.* For the faults of a few fanatics the millions of our countrymen who are loyal to the core of their hearts should not suffer.

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## THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY.

*[At a meeting of the Viceregal Council held on March 22, 1916, the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Banerjea moved the following Resolution :—]*

That this Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council to consider the advisability of placing the University of Calcutta on the same footing with the Universities of Madras and Bombay in respect of the relations between the Calcutta University and the head of the Local Government for purposes of administration and control.

In moving the Resolution, he said :—

Sir, under the provisions of the Indian Universities Act of 1904, His Excellency the Viceroy is the Chancellor of the Calcutta University, and large powers of control are vested in the Government of India. To us, who are graduates of the Calcutta University, it is a matter of pride and honour that His Excellency Lord Hardinge should be the head of our University, and speaking for myself, I will say this, that but for the approaching retirement of His Excellency, I for one would not have brought forward this Resolution. Speaking as Chancellor of the University of Calcutta at the Convocation held on the 15th March, 1915, His Excellency was pleased to observe that his position as Chancellor of the University brought him in direct contact with the student community of India. In them and in their welfare, Lord Hardinge has always felt a keen and abiding interest. We cannot forget the incognito visit which His Excellency paid to some hostels in Calcutta, with a view to ascertaining for himself, after

personal examination, the conditions under which the students lived in those hostels. Sir, nothing so powerfully appeals to the imagination of an Oriental people as when a ruler conceals his personality when doing good ; and the memory of this visit will long remain an abiding possession with the student community of Calcutta. Lord Hardinge has always been a generous patron of the Calcutta University. The Government of India have paid a sum of over 42 lakhs of rupees for our hostels, besides other grants, the capitalised valuation of which would amount to about 36½ lakhs. Sir, I feel it my duty to make this public statement as some acknowledgment, however inadequate, of the obligation which we are under to our retiring Chancellor.

Sir, my Resolution has a constitutional bearing, and it is intimately connected with the raising of the status of our Province to that of a Presidency Government. Bengal was made a Presidency Government by the Royal Proclamation of the 12th December, 1911. A part of that proclamation was embodied in a Parliamentary Statute in January, 1912—Statute 2 & 3 Geo. V, Chapter 6. I will read the first clause of the Statute, which is pertinent to the Resolution now under discussion. Clause I says :—

It is hereby declared that the Governor and Governor in Council of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal shall, within that Presidency as so delimited as aforesaid, have all the rights, duties, functions and immunities which the Governors and Governors in Council of the Presidencies of Fort St. George and Bombay, respectively, possess, and all enactments relating to the Governors of those Presidencies, etc., etc.

Now, this is the important part :

Provided that, if the Governor-General in Council reserves to himself any powers now exercisable by him in relation to the

Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, those powers shall continue to be exercisable by the Governor-General in Council in the like manner and to the like extent as heretofore.

Therefore, Sir, it is obvious that, under the provisions of this Statute, the Governor of Bengal is placed exactly on the same footing with the Governors of Madras and Bombay, save and except in respect of certain powers and functions which are reserved to the Governor-General in Council, and which at the time were being exercised by him. Those powers and functions are two in number : (1) authority to fill temporary vacancies on the Bench of the Calcutta High Court, and (2) authority as Chancellor of the Calcutta University. Lord Crewe was then Secretary of State, and when introducing this Bill he made certain observations which, with the permission of the Council, I will read as bearing upon this particular proviso. I am quoting from Hansard. He said :—

I now come to the clauses of the Bill. The first clause (that is the clause I have just read) declares that the Governor of Bengal should have all the rights, duties and functions which the Governors of Madras and Bombay possess. The effect of the clause is to give the Governor of Bengal these extra powers given by the later enactments under which power was taken to apply to any new Presidency the powers which the Governors of the other Presidencies possess. Then, the House will observe—this is the important part—that two provisions are attached to this first clause. These provisions depend upon the fact that the powers of the Calcutta High Court are not, as matters stand, curtailed although the area of Bengal is changed and a new Lieutenant-Governorship is created. The power which is pointed to in proviso (a) is this : that the High Courts Act of 1871 gives the Governor-General in Council power to appoint temporary Judges to the High Court of Calcutta.

Nothing is said about the Calcutta University, for the



simple reason that the same grounds apply. The size of the Province of Bengal was curtailed, but the jurisdiction of the Calcutta University remained the same as before, extending over the new Province of Bihar and Orissa, over Burma and Assam. It was not thought desirable at the time that a local Governor should exercise authority over areas outside his territorial limits. The same objection, of course, would not apply to the Governor-General in Council. The Governor of Bengal, who succeeded the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, stepped into his position as Rector of the Calcutta University. That is a new office altogether in connection with the Calcutta University, which does not exist in any other University. The powers and functions of the Rector are defined in section 28 of the Universities Act. Clause 1 says that the Rector shall take precedence at Convocations next after the Chancellor, but before the Vice-Chancellor. Clause 2 says that the Chancellor may delegate all or any of his powers to the Rector. Sir, I do not know whether any powers have been delegated. My own impression is that they have not been ; but I should like to be corrected if necessary. This I do know as a matter of fact, that from time to time in reference to important considerations, the opinions of the Rector are invited by the Government of India. These opinions—I am not a lawyer, but I venture to think that I am right in making the observation—these opinions have no statutory force, but they have a moral value, as coming from the Governor of a great Province and a Governor of such great popularity and one held in such high esteem and regard as Lord Carmichael.

Sir, I have dwelt upon the constitutional aspect of this question in order to indicate that the conditions

which led to the acceptance of the constitution at that time are now in process of change and transformation. I take it, Sir, that the new province of Bihar and Orissa will soon have a University of its own. I presume that the Bill is nearly ready ; and with Sir Harcourt Butler, our ex-Education Minister, as Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, I take it that within a measureable distance of time, Burma too will have a University suited to its own requirements. Sir, the Governor or the Lieutenant-Governor of every province in India is the Chancellor of the University belonging to that province. Why should an exception be made in the case of Bengal ? I urge this proposition, not indeed on the ground of administrative symmetry. Administrative anomalies may and do exist, and they are tolerated so long as no inconvenience is caused, no injustice is perpetrated ; but I rest my case upon far higher grounds. My submission is this, that the University system of a province should be in direct touch with and controlled by the public opinion of that province, and for this purpose the head of the Government should be the Chancellor of the University. Sir, I look forward to a time—it will not perhaps be within our lifetime, it may be a dream, but many of our dreams have become realities—when the Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of our Universities will be elected by the members of those Universities, and I think we who are here working for the future, may prepare the ground for this consummation. I do not indeed place my Resolution upon that exalted basis. But I give expression to a suggestion which occurs to me as I am speaking upon this matter. Sir, the Government of India, when it was located in Calcutta, was in direct touch with the sources of local public opinion ; but that

is not and cannot be the case now. I will say this, that I can conceive of no possible objection to the acceptance of my proposition except this, that the Governor of Bengal as Chancellor of our University may exercise authority over areas outside his jurisdiction. I ask, are there not Governors and Lieutenant-Governors who are doing that now? The Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces is the Chancellor of the Allahabad University, and as such he exercises authority over affiliated institutions in the Central Provinces and in Ajmer, which are distinct and separate administrative units. Take another case, which is even more pertinent and apposite. The Governor of Madras as Chancellor of the University exercises authority over affiliated institutions in Ceylon, which is not a part of the Government of India, and is not even subject to the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State for India. Yet, Sir, no catastrophe, no cataclysm has occurred. The authorities in Ceylon have not complained of the curtailment of their power or of the loss of their dignity. Educated Ceylon goes to sleep without any perturbation of conscience or loss of self-respect. In view of these cases, may I not ask those who are opposed to this proposition to reconsider their views in the light of the facts to which I have referred? But, Sir, I desire to place my case upon a still higher ground. We have been promised provincial autonomy by the great Despatch of the 25th August, 1911. Attempts have been made to whittle down the significance of that message. What has been written, however, cannot be unwritten, *scriptum manet*; and we as the representatives of the people will see to it that this beneficent message is redeemed in the fulness of time. Provincial

autonomy is bound to come sooner or later. I hope it will come in the train of those political readjustments that are inevitable after the war. Provincial autonomy, if it means anything, means this, that each province should be self-contained, self-dependent, self-governing. If my Resolution is accepted and given effect to, it will be a distinct step towards the fulfilment of the pledge which is contained in the Despatch of the 25th August, 1911, and which will for ever be associated in the annals of Indian administration with the name and fame of Lord Hardinge. Sir, it does not seem to me that it is necessary that there should be immediate legislation upon this point, if my proposition is accepted. The Chancellor may delegate his powers, under the section to which I have referred, to the Rector. The Rector, without the name, will then become the *de facto* Chancellor. The experiment may be tried ; and if it is found successful, legislation may be undertaken afterwards. My proposition is an exceedingly moderate one. All that I ask the Government to do is not to jump to a conclusion or to come to a finding with regard to the great issues which I suggest. All that I ask the Government of India to do, is to consider—mind you, nothing more than to consider—the advisability of carrying out a reform which will make the head of the Local Government the responsible head of the University. I do not want that my Hon'ble friend should get up in his place and say ' we are not in a position to accept that proposition, and we cannot make Lord Carmichael at once Chancellor of the University.' I do not want that. I want you to consider the proposition. I want you to consider it from the standpoint which I have suggested, in the light of the facts which I have

mentioned. I want you also in justice to those who are opposed to me, to consider the objections that may be raised. I do not think that any proposition can be more modest, or more reasonable, and therefore it is with some confidence that I submit this Resolution for the acceptance of the Council.

*[After some discussion the Hon. Sir C. Sankaran Nair accepted the Resolution with some reservations, on behalf of the Government. Mr. Banerjea spoke as follows in reply.]*

Sir, I thank the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Department for accepting the Resolution. Bengal opinion would have been more pleased if he could have seen his way to accept the Resolution without the reservations to which he has referred. There has been an animated debate over this matter, but, really, if we look to the bottom of the whole thing, there is perfect agreement and unanimity in regard to it.

I do not think my Hon'ble friends, the official members—and I congratulate them on having broken their golden silence on this occasion—really object to our Governor being the Chancellor of our University. What they are apprehensive of, and what they object to, is that their University affairs would come under the direction of the Government of Bengal and would pass away from the control of the Viceroy of India. They do not object to our being autonomous in this matter, but they want to safeguard their own interests. I think they are quite right. I confess that if I were in their position, I would take precisely the same view. I have no quarrel with them, but I have a quarrel with the Government in regard to this matter. I desire to call the attention of my Hon'ble friend Sir

Sankaran Nair, to section 28, clause 2. Of course he was an eminent Judge, an ex-Chief Justice, and my reading of the law must be subordinated to his interpretation of it. But this is, so far as I can make out, a matter of common sense. This is what section 28, clause 2, says—

*A Voice* :—What Act ?

The Hon'ble Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea :—It is the Universities Act of 1904.

This is what section 28, clause 2, says :—

The Chancellor may delegate any power conferred upon him by the Act of Incorporation or this Act to the Rector.

Since, therefore, the Chancellor is at liberty to delegate any or all his powers, my submission is this. Let the Chancellor delegate his powers in respect of colleges within the territorial limits of Bengal to the Governor, and let him retain control over the other provinces. I think that section justifies that. So far as Bengal is concerned, let the Chancellor delegate the powers that are vested in him—and the section gives him the authority—in respect of the affiliated institutions in Bengal—and they are 41 in number, Sir, out of 48—retaining his power in respect of the institutions outside the territorial jurisdiction of Bengal. That seems to me the obvious solution of the problem. These institutions, in the outlying areas of Burma, of Assam and of the new Province, will continue, as now, under the authority of the Governor-General. There will be a change so far as we are concerned, and our Governor will be *de facto* Chancellor though not in name. The Viceroy will continue to be the Chancellor in name, but by this delegation, the Governor of Bengal will become the *de facto* Chancellor for the affiliated

institutions in Bengal. This, Sir, seems to me to be a solution of the question that will reconcile conflicting interests, and divergent views, conciliate Bengal opinions and the opinions which have been expressed in this Council Chamber to-day. I think that is the solution, and I really do not know why the Government should not see its way to accept it. But, if, for reasons with which I am unacquainted, Government is not able to adopt it, then my submission is that it should expedite the creation of these different Universities. I am entirely in favour of the creation of a University in Assam. Why should not Assam have a University of its own and work out its educational destinies in its own way, according to its lights and according to its requirements? I do not at all share the cynicism—if I may be permitted to express myself in that way—of the Hon'ble Colonel Gurdon who asks 'What do the Calcutta lawyers know about the educational requirements of Assam?' The Calcutta lawyers are not the masters of the University. 80 per cent. of the Fellows are officials or non-officials nominated by the Government. If I am excused for using strong language, I will say this, that they are the creatures of the Government. And what have the Calcutta lawyers to do with the matter? Over and above the Calcutta lawyers there is the Government of Bengal and the Government of India. Assam has done wonderfully in the matter of educational development. And let those who malign the Calcutta lawyers bear in mind that these lawyers have had a large hand in helping forward the educational development of Assam. My Hon'ble friend Mr. Dadabhoy quoted the opinion of the Hon'ble Sir Ashutosh Mukerji. That opinion is a matter of antiquarian history to-day. The opinion is

as old as the year 1912. I am not permitted to disclose the secrets of conversations which I have had with Sir Ashutosh Mukerji, who is a high educational authority, but I imagine that the spirit of his dreams has undergone a change and that the opinions which were paraded before us in that ostentatious fashion, so peculiar to my Hon'ble friend over there are not admitted by him at the present moment. They may be relegated to a museum of things ancient and when the biographer of Sir Ashutosh Mukerji attempts to write his life he may refer to it and may draw the lesson that even the greatest amongst us are sometimes apt to be versatile.

I say, Sir, once again, with all the emphasis that I can command, that we in Bengal—and I represent the public sense and the public conscience of Bengal in this matter—do not in the smallest degree desire to stand in the way of the creation of the Universities in Assam, in Burma and in Bihar and Orissa. We shall welcome them with enthusiasm because we shall recognise them as the products, the children, the progeny of the Calcutta University. We shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we have helped forward the educational development of these Provinces. No jealousy, no malice, no feeling of antagonism will mar the beautiful prospect that will open out to them and to us. We are anxious that they should have Universities of their own, but we are also anxious that justice should be done to us, and that the head of our Government should also be the Chancellor of our University. There is no mistake as to what official opinion in Bengal is. My Hon'ble friend to my right, Mr. Cumming, in that quiet, dignified but firm way which is characteristic of him, stated plainly



what the views of the Government of Bengal are. And then there are the representatives of public opinion in Bengal. Official and non-official opinion is united in the demand which I have ventured to put forward to-day before this Council. And that demand affects 41 of the colleges and schools of the Calcutta University, as against seven in the other Provinces. We do not want to stand in their way : give them their Universities, but do not bar the way against us. Do not flout public opinion in Bengal by refusing to us the reform which we are entitled to have because we are a Presidency Government. My Hon'ble friend Mr. Setalvad, has asked : 'Why have you not brought forward cases to justify your motion ?' My friend is a lawyer ; I am not, but I understand the tricks of lawyers. And I will tell him this, that I did not want to prejudice this controversy or handicap it by creating irritation and bad feeling at the commencement. I had a bundle of cases in my pocket, and I could produce them just now, of mandates issued by the Government of India, being carried out in defiance of the wishes of the Senate. I do not want to refer to them because I deem it inexpedient to injure my case or handicap it by creating irritation. Therefore, my friend will pardon me if he thought there was a flaw in the arguments that I ventured to bring forward. I am grateful to my friend the Hon'ble Sir Sankaran Nair for accepting the Resolution, but I hope he will give effect to the section to which I have referred. And if, for legal reasons with which I am unacquainted, he is not able to do so, I earnestly appeal to him to expedite the creation of those Universities which may enable us to place the Governor of our Province at the head of our University. That

would be the first step towards freeing the University from that official control to which my Hon'ble friend Mr. Setalvad referred ; and as popular opinion in Bengal is a growing power, we shall soon bring the Chancellor of our University under our own control.

The Resolution was put and agreed to.

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## SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS.

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*[In moving the resolution relating to the separation of judicial and executive functions in the Imperial Legislative Council, in March 1913, the Hon'ble Babu Surendranath Banerjea said :—]*

Sir,—I have the honour to move the following resolution :—" That this Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council that the grants made to local Governments be increased by such allotments as the Government of India may think fit with a view to enable them to carry out the experiment of the separation of judicial and executive functions in the administration of criminal justice in areas to be selected by them with the approval of the Government of India." Sir, the resolution is a financial one involving however administrative issues of great moment. I have tried to make the resolution as moderate as I could. The resolution speaks of the separation of judicial and executive functions as an experiment. It is to be in the nature of a tentative measure not to be definitely incorporated into the regular administrative machinery unless and until it has been tried and has been found successful. If it is attended with results, other than those which are

anticipated by its supporters the experiment will have to be abandoned. The point upon which I desire to lay particular stress is this that the dominating note of the resolution is that the separation is to be an experiment for the present and that its further extension and development is to depend upon the results obtained and the experience gained. Nor is this all. The experiment is not to be tried all over the country, nor even in the regulation provinces, but only in such areas as may be selected by the Local Governments, subject to the supervision of the Government of India. Therefore, Sir, all that the resolution seeks to secure is the acceptance of the principle in a definite and practical form leaving the areas to be selected such as Government may decide.

I claim, therefore, on behalf of this resolution, that it is fenced round by conditions which ought to allay the fears and anxieties of the most cautious among administrators. Sir, not for one moment do I lay aside my own strong personal conviction on the subject, my sense of the unspeakable boon which this reform will confer upon all those who may have to appeal before our criminal courts ; but at the same time, I feel that I have no right to thrust my convictions, however deep-seated they may be, upon a great Government weighted with a sense of responsibility and naturally anxious to proceed with due caution and circumspection. Sir, no Englishman can regard this combination of judicial and executive functions, this lumping up of the prosecution and the judge in one and the same person, without violence to his own inborn instincts and the traditional and environments in the midst of which he has been brought up. Accordingly we find from the earliest days of British

rule many distinguished Anglo-Indian administrators to whose testimony I shall presently refer expressing themselves in terms of strong disapprobation of this defect in the administrative machinery and urging this modification. So far back as the year 1792, in the days of Lord Morris under a regulation of that year, it was declared that the combination of these two functions was extremely undesirable. That view was expressed 40 years later by a distinguished Anglo-Indian administrator. Mr. Frederick Halliday who as the President of a Committee that was appointed to enquire into police organisation, said that it was most undesirable and the same opinion was endorsed by his colleagues.

[After alluding to the opinion of Sir F. Halliday and others, the Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjee said :—]

Lord Cross, the Conservative Secretary of State for India and Lord Kimberley, the Liberal Secretary of State for India, in the discussions that took place in the House of Lords, declared their adhesion to this principle. In 1899, a very important memorial was addressed to the Secretary of State for India, Lord George Hamilton, by distinguished persons including Lord Hobhouse who one time was Law Member of this Council, Sir Richard Garth, Sir Richard Couch, late Chief Justice of the High Court of Bengal, Sir Raymond West of Bombay Civil Service, Sir John Bartle Frere, Sir William Markby, Judges of the High Court and Mr. Reynolds of the Revenue Board of Bengal. Nothing came of this memorial at that time beyond a pious-expression of hope that the needful would be done at some future time. Sir, the question received an added impetus by the discussions which took place in this

Council in March 1908 and then Sir Harvey Adamson, the Home member made a very important pronouncement on behalf of the Government. With your permission, Sir, I will read that pronouncement. I fully believe I am quoting from his speech delivered, I think, on the 27th March, 1908 though I am not quite sure of the date. 'I fully believe that subordinate magistrates very rarely do an injustice wittingly but the inevitable result of the present system—the combination of judicial and executive functions—is that criminal trials affecting the general peace of the district are not always conducted in that atmosphere of cool impartiality which pervades a court of justice. Nor does this completely define the evil—he calls it an evil which lies not so much in what is done as in what may be expected to be done—for it is not enough that the administration of justice should be pure. It can never be the bedrock of our rule unless it is also above 'suspicion.' I do not think it is possible to add to the eloquence of these words. I therefore, claim, Sir, that we have a vast body of officials of the highest position impregnated with a lofty sense of their responsibility as members of this great Government in support of the principle underlying the reform which I have ventured to place before this Council. Not only that, Sir, we have passed the stage of discussion. We are about to enter upon the stage of practice. On this occasion in the course of this debate, Sir Harvey Adamson declared that the Government of India had definitely decided to introduce the reform. It may be in a cautious and tentative way. I will quote his words ; he said :—'The Government of India have decided to advance cautiously and tentatively towards the separation of judicial and executive functions, in

those parts of India where the local condition render that change possible and appropriate.'

Sir, the local Governments take their cue from the Supreme Government. This was said in March 1908. As I have just observed the local Governments take their cue from the Supreme Government and in the Budget discussion which took place in the Bengal Legislative Council in April 1911, Sir William Duke, now member of the Executive Council of Bengal, then Chief Secretary to the Government, held out distinct promise that the reform would be introduced at an early date. I will quote his observations. 'The scheme for the separation of judicial and executive functions is continuously under consideration. The Government of India decided that an advance should be made in a cautious and tentative way' and the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal with a due sense of the responsibility of his utterances says that 'the scheme is continuously under the consideration of the Government and no doubt proposals regarding it will be brought forward as early as possible.' These are his words. But a scheme of that kind is one which requires mature consideration not merely of the Provincial Government and it is certainly unlikely that anything will take place even this year, the year to which the Budget refers. That was said, Sir, in April, 1911. We have a still later pronouncement in September, 1912, round this table though certainly not in this hall. I think it was the Home Member, I am not sure, but it was a member on behalf of the Government of India, who said in reply to a question asked by the Hon'ble Mr. Sachidananda Sinha that the matter was under the consideration of the Government of India. Therefore,

Sir, we have three outstanding facts to be gathered from the three pronouncements to which I have called your attention. In the first place, that the Government of India have decided to inaugurate this experiment tentatively or cautiously is immaterial but that the Government have decided to inaugurate this experiment. Secondly, we have it from the lips of the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal speaking on behalf of that Government that the experiment would soon be introduced and lastly we have the statement made on the floor of this Council by a responsible member of the Government of India that the matter is under consideration. Therefore, Sir, I take it that the question has emerged from the stage of discussion and has entered the stage of practical politics and, Sir, it seems to me that one of the immediate effects of this separation would be an effect highly beneficial to the interests of the Indian Civil Service. We have heard a great deal about the necessity of judicial training on the part of the Indian Civil Service—I have no opinions of my own on that subject; because myself I am not a lawyer and have never been a lawyer; but, Sir, it is clear that the effect of the separation of the executive and judicial branch would be a severance of that alliance between the executive and the judicial branches which, I think, does not improve the tone of the judicial branch and a concentration of the attention of the judicial branch upon its own appropriate duties. Therefore, Sir, it is clear that the Government have decided to introduce this experiment cautiously and tentatively and the question is when is that to be done. In 1911 the matter was under consideration. It is time that the deliberations of Government should bear fruit in some practical scheme inaugurating this experiment.



The only possible objections that I have heard against the inauguration of this experiment are prestige and cost. Sir, with reference to the question of prestige I will say this, that indeed is a poor sort of prestige which is associated with a system that in theory is indefensible and in practice is attended with miscarriages of justice. Such prestige is no aid or source of strength to the Government. On the contrary it is a source of weakness and embarrassment to the Government.

With regard to this question of prestige again I have the high authority of Sir Harvey Adamson, and I venture to quote him. He said on the 27th of March, 1908, 'Can any Government be strong whose administration of justice is not entirely above suspicion. The answer must be in the negative. A combination of functions is in such a condition of society a direct weakening of the prestige of the Empire. This question of prestige in the larger sense has been altogether discarded and no longer forms an operative part of the policy of the Government of India.' Here again I may quote a very distinguished authority, Mr. Montagu, the present Under Secretary of State for India.

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# MISCELLANEOUS SPEECHES.

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## INDIAN UNITY.

*[The following address on Indian Unity was delivered by Mr. Banerjea at a meeting of the Student's Association, held on the 16th March 1878, in the Medical College Theatre, Calcutta.]*

It has been remarked by Tennyson, somewhere in his poems, that the path of human progress is streaked with blood, that the car of human civilization rolls forward amid the corpses of men, women and children. This remark seems to me to be pregnant with truth. The history of the human race abundantly proves it. The Asiatic invasion of Alexander superficially considered seems but a long catalogue of wanton bloodshed, of indiscriminate slaughter. But if you examine the matter a little deeper, another feature of the case presently reveals itself to view. The Asiatic invasion of Alexander served for the first time to bring the East and the West into close and intimate contact, served for the first time to bring the Western mind into close and intimate communion with the Eastern mind. And what was the result of this contact, this communion? Eastern science with its amazing results, with its complicated method, with its marvellous developments, for the first time lay unfolded before the awe struck gaze of the Grecian people. From amid the blood and confusion of battle, from amid the clanging of martial music, from amid the groans of the dead and the dying, the Greek mind seized with wonderful grasp those cardinal

principles of Eastern science, which were henceforth to become the regulating maxims of Western science, and which "in the fulness of time" were to confer such unspeakable and untold blessings upon the human race. A party of *savans* had accompanied the expedition of Alexander. These men were the intellectual beacons of the age in which they lived, men who have left the imperishable stamp of their genius upon the thought and culture of succeeding generations. These wise men of the West had access to the scientific records of the Assyrians and the Chaldeans. There they discovered that the two methods under which scientific investigations had been carried on in the East, were observation and experiment. Observation and experiment had been in the East the prolific mother of great discoveries. Nature, when questioned under the guidance of this two-fold method, had yielded up the hidden secrets that lay embosomed within her. Observation and experiment had done great things for Eastern science. Might they not be made to perform a similar duty for Western science? So spoke Aristotle and the band of illustrious men by whom he was surrounded. A new era dawns upon the history of Grecian science. Observation and experiment were now to regulate Western science, as they had before regulated Eastern science. The blood, therefore, that was shed in the Greek expedition was not shed in vain. The treasure that was lavished in that expedition, was not lavished in vain. Out of that blood, out of that treasure, there rose the proud fabric of European science. There was thus, under the orderings of Providence, a distinct mission associated with the expedition of Alexander. That mission was to lay deep and secure the foundation-stone of the noble

temple of Western science upon the firm and immutable basis of observation and experiment.

In the same way Roman Empire had a mission of its own to accomplish. Roman civilization followed in the path of Roman conquest. The legionaries of Rome bore aloft the banner of human progress. Under Roman influences, Europe emerged from her primeval barbarism. But the great mission of Rome was not accomplished, her predestined course in history was not run till Christ had appeared on the scene, till she had prepared men's minds for the acceptance of those great, those sublime, those eternal truths for which the immortal founder of Christianity lived and died. What were those truths which Christ preached? What were those principles which he sought to impress on the minds of men and for which, when the hour came, he offered himself up a meek sacrifice on the blessed cross. The sum and substance of Christ's teachings is embraced in the simple but comprehensive formula of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. Christ taught that all men were equal, he taught that every man who drew the vital air was the equal of his fellow man. He taught that in Heaven's great book, in the eternal rolls of light, there was no distinction between the black man and the white man, between the European and the Asiatic, between the Roman and the barbarian. And the policy, the precepts, the maxims of imperial Rome had prepared men's minds for the admission of this great principle of equality. Roman Law admitted of no distinction between the Roman-born, and him who was not so born. In the eyes of the Roman Law, all Roman subjects were equal. There was not a right, not a privilege, not an immunity which a Roman enjoyed.

and which was not shared by the obscurest inhabitant of the most distant part of the Roman Empire. There was not an office in the state to which a Roman subject might not aspire. He might aspire to fill the senatorial rank, he might aspire to the governor of a province, the commander of an army or the confidential adviser of his sovereign. Rome's mission, then, was accomplished when under the shadows of her imperial throne, Christ first taught in his simple and noble eloquence, the great principle of equality, that principle which was to receive its last solemn seal and sanction amid the blood and smoke of the great French Revolution.

Rome then had mission of her own to accomplish. There was a mission associated with the expedition of Alexander. And am I to understand that England has no mission in the East to accomplish? Aye, she has a glorious mission to fulfil here, a mission far nobler than it ever fell to the lot of Greek, Macedonian or Roman to accomplish. It is England's mission in the East to save, regenerate, emancipate from the chains of ignorance, error and superstition, 250 millions of human beings, to heal the wounds that have been inflicted on them by the rapacity of their former rulers, to develop in them a self-reliant, manly, energetic character, to spread through the land the great blessings of peace, contentment and happiness, but above all its England's noble mission in the East to help towards the consummation of Indian unity, to reconcile the jarring conflicts of the diverse Indian nationalities to bring them nearer together, to evoke in them a sentiment of brotherhood and make them feel that they have to make common cause for the redress of common grievances.

Gentlemen, I cannot help thinking that it is our

proud privilege to live in one of the most interesting epochs in the history of our country, one of those epochs, which, if I am at all allowed to take a forecast of the future, will not be without its influence on the fortunes of after generations. Those fierce animosities, those bitter dissensions, those degrading passions which in the last and the preceding centuries had converted this beautiful country of ours into one vast ensanguined plain, have now happily subsided, and we live in an era of unexampled peace prosperity and happiness. For this great result we are indebted to the British Government. If at this moment the semi-barbarous hordes of Afghanistan, bursting our barriers, are not sweeping across our country, it is because of the omnipotent might of the British Ruler. If, at this moment, happily the sentiment of brotherhood has been universally evoked in the minds of the Indian races, it is because under the auspices of British rule, the varied and diversified peoples that inhabit this great country have been welded together into a compact and homogeneous mass. But I ask, gentlemen, is this after all a season of unmixed gratulation? Have we no mournful reflections to darken the horizon of our thoughts? May we not, occupying the vantage ground that we now happen to occupy, emancipate ourselves from the present, look back into the past and question the past? May we not resuscitate the dying embers of a by-gone age and endeavour to fan them forth into a living flame, full of light for our future guidance? May we not, occupying the intellectual eminence that we have attained, invoke the genius of history and call upon her to declare what were the circumstances, what the incidents, what the causes which brought about our fall and have

perpetuated our degradation ? The Goddess of History thus questioned, is sure to return one answer, and it will be an answer at once decisive and unequivocal in its character. The Goddess will answer—"Indians, your dissensions, your jealousies, your animosities, have brought about your fall and have perpetuated your degradation. Learn to respect the holy principle of union. Learn to love one another as brothers. Learn to make common cause for the redress of common grievances, and the great God of nations, the Protector of the rights of fallen peoples may yet from his high place in Heaven look upon you with compassion, may yet in his infinite mercy ordain the dawning of a bright day for your country." So will speak the Goddess of History and she will point to facts in Indian History in support of her statement.

But, perhaps, it will be said that the question of Indian unity, of the intellectual, moral and social union of the Indian peoples, is a dream, is a chimera, the phantom of an excited imagination. It will be said that India throughout the long period of her chequered history, has presented the spectacle of a country, inhabited by peoples, separated by language, separated by religion, separated by manners, and customs, separated in short by everything that constitutes the distinctive difference between races and peoples. Why then, it will be said, at this time of day commit the monstrous absurdity of talking of Indian unity ?

Gentlemen, I have stated the arguments against Indian unity as strongly as the case admits of, in order to point out that these arguments are not wholly unanswerable in their character. I invite your attention once more to the terms of the proposition you are considering. India

is inhabited by peoples separated by language, by religion, by manners, and customs. Is their intellectual, social, moral union possible? I say such a union is possible—is practicable; and I appeal to the facts of Indian history in support of the statement. Let us take the example of Switzerland, to begin with. Switzerland, you are aware, is a federal country, enjoying the blessings of a republican government. Switzerland is divided into a number of cantons. Well, there are Roman Catholic cantons and there are Protestant cantons. There are French speaking cantons, and there are German speaking cantons. But in spite of these differences of language and religion, Switzerland is a united country, and never was the strength of Swiss union, the compactness of that homogeneity more strikingly exemplified, than on that memorable day when that great oppressor of our race, Napoleon Bonaparte endeavoured to wipe out this little republic from the face of Europe. Take again the case of Belgium. Belgium is a united country, and it would have been truly remarkable if it were not, considering how limited its area is. Well, in Belgium, there are the Wallons, and there is the Flemish speaking population, there are again Roman Catholic Belgians, and there are Protestant Belgians. But Belgium is a united country in spite of religious and linguistic differences. Let us now take the case of Germany. In Germany, we do not, indeed, meet with those strongly marked linguistic differences, we notice in the case of Belgium and Switzerland, but I know of no country where in modern times the spirit of religious difference, I had almost said, the spirit of bitter religious hatred, has been carried on to a greater or more extravagant length than in this



confederated German Empire. And if it were not that this was the 19th century, that Germany was placed in the midst of the hallowed, the consecrated, the peaceful influences of modern civilization, Germany would to-day have presented the spectacle of a country, deluged with blood, shed on the altar of religious differences. Germany is united in spite of strongly marked religious differences in her people. I shall take one more instance, and this time it will be Italy. Italy, you are aware, was united in 1870. But the idea was a very old one. Dante had sung of Italian unification. The highest minds in Italy had aspired to bring about the consummation of that great event. Again and again there rose up poets, princes, philosophers and statesmen, with whom the great dream of their lives was the dream of Italian unification. But it was believed there were insuperable obstacles to the unification of Italy. The Italians had become a degraded people. They had forgotten the glorious memories of the past. They had forgotten the great deeds of their sires. They had forgotten the patriotism of Brutus, the eloquence of Cicero, the martial achievements of Cæsar. Differences of language added to the confusion. The Neapolitan understood not the Roman, the Roman understood not the Venetian. They were all brothers, born of the same illustrious progenitors, the inheritors of the same great memories, yet they knew not one another, understood not one another, they were strangers in each other's sight. But was there no hope for Italy? Was she for ever to remain in the grovelling depths of continued misery? Aye no. The day of Italy's deliverance was fast approaching. The fiat had gone forth, the celestial mandate had been issued that Italy was to be saved. The hour had arrived.

The men were there. Under the guidance of Garibaldi and Mazzini Italy rose to the conception of Italian unity ; and through acts of noble and unheard-of self-sacrifice, which have shed lasting glory on the honoured names of the martyred patriots of Italy, the Italian people brought about the unity and the independence of their country. The unification of Italy was effected notwithstanding dialectical differences.

Thus, then, gentlemen, from the instances I have just cited, we are naturally led to conclude that there may be religious differences, there may be linguistic differences, but they do not form insuperable barriers to the consummation of a national unity. A point has thus been gained in the argument. But it is my contention that the considerations I have just urged against national unity lose much of their weight when we bear in mind the wholly altered circumstances under which we now live. Modern India is very different from ancient India. The conditions of life in modern India are very different from the conditions of life in ancient India. We may deprecate the change. We may regret the circumstance. But there is no denying the fact that we are in the midst of a great revolution along whose current we are irresistibly borne. English civilization has been introduced into our midst, and along with it have been introduced certain revolutionary agencies of mighty potency, which are operating with powerful effect upon the framework of Indian Society, thinning away its vital parts and greatly helping the cause of Indian unity. Foremost amongst these agencies, English Education claims our attention. The traveller who visits the cities of Delhi and Agra is struck with wonderment at the magnificent works of architectural beauty

which still grace these once imperial capitals. They remind us of Moslem supremacy ? They are the silent monumental records of by-gone times. They remind us of the generosity and humanity of Akbar, of the splendour of Shah Jehan, of the religious bigotry of Aurangzeb. England indeed cannot boast of such monuments of architectural magnificence ; but her claims to the lasting gratitude of posterity will rest upon a surer, more permanent and durable basis, upon the conviction which is deep and earnest in us, *viz.*, that under the auspices of English rule were, for the first time, sown the seeds of a civilization containing the germs of India's future greatness, of her political, moral and intellectual regeneration.

The question might be asked how is English Education helping the cause of Indian union. I have mentioned that one of the obstacles to national unity is the diversity of dialects that prevails in India. English Education partly removes this difficulty by supplying a common medium of communication between the educated classes. I may not know Maharati. An educated native of Bombay may not know Bengali. But we can hold intercourse with one another, correspond with one another through the common medium of the English language. Nor is this all. English Education has uplifted all who have come under its influence to a common platform of thoughts, feelings and aspirations. Educated Indians whether of Bengal, Madras, Bombay or the North-Western Provinces are brought up under the same intellectual, moral, and political influences. Kindred hopes, feelings and ideas are thus generated. The educated classes throughout India are thus brought nearer together.

Railways also are greatly helping to bring about a feeling of unity and sympathy between the Indian races. Railways have abridged distances. The distance between Calcutta and Delhi is not 1,400 miles but is only a question of about 44 hours. The distance between Calcutta and Lahore is not 1,600 miles but is only a question of about 52 hours. The distance between Calcutta and Bombay is not 1,900 miles but is only a question of about 61 hours. The means of communication being so easy, we have taken more largely to travelling. We know one another now much more intimately than we ever did before. Those prejudices which had separated us for ages are fast disappearing, and the patriot sees in the distant horizon the faint streaks of that dawn which are to usher in the day of his country's regeneration and union. Railways are thus helping to promote Indian union.

The existence of a native Press is also calculated to bring about the same result. If I had addressed you day before yesterday, I should have said that the native Press was a free Press. But within the last forty-eight hours a law has been hurriedly enacted which has put a gag into the mouth of the Vernacular Press, has enveloped its fate in deep gloom, has dealt a terrible blow at the cause of Indian progress and enlightenment. The law which has been enacted, and the circumstances under which it has been enacted strongly remind us of our degradation, of the stretches to which the exercise of arbitrary power might be carried in this country, and how it has become necessary that we should interpose an effective and at the same time a thoroughly constitutional barrier against the reckless exercise of such great power. This is not the time nor the place to

enter into a discussion of the merits of this most important measure of Law, but there are one or two remarks, which I feel bound to make with reference to a matter which must be uppermost in the minds of most of us here present. The Law has been described to be an "enabling" measure, a "preventive" measure, a "non-punitive" measure. Now, the concluding section of this non-punitive Act declares that nothing in that Act will exempt a person punished under it from being punished under the provisions of any other Act against which he may have offended. Now let us take the case of an unfortunate editor who has given security and who in the opinion of the Magistrate has been guilty of criminal intimidation. He forfeits his security and he is also liable to punishment under the Penal Code. Under this preventive, this non-punitive Law, a man may thus be punished twice. The Law was passed at one and the same sitting, the standing orders having been suspended. The usual course is, when a measure is introduced into the Supreme Council, to refer it to a Select Committee. The Bill is also to be published in the Government Gazette, so that the public might have an opportunity of discussing the merits of the proposed measure of law. Nothing of the kind was done in the present instance. These formalities were quietly dispensed with, and the Bill became Law, the same day it was introduced. Now I ask what justification was there for this undue and precipitate haste. Was the atmosphere infected with treason? Were daggers floating about in the air? Were the Russians knocking at the gates of Peshawar? Was this great Empire, the embodiment of English justice and humanity in the East, this Empire resting upon the willing allegiance, the steadfast devotion and

the fervent loyalty of 250 millions of human beings tottering to its foundations? If there is peace, happiness, contentment throughout the length and breadth of this great country, I repeat what need was there for this precipitate haste? But I forget Sir Alexander Arbuthnot has told us that it was intended to avoid agitation and hence was it that the Bill became Law at one and the same sitting. The Government, I venture to think, is greatly mistaken if it really believes that by hastily carrying the Bill, it will avoid agitation. There will be an agitation on a vast, extensive scale, commensurate with the greatness of the occasion, and the importance of the subject. There will be an agitation which shall extend from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from the Indus to the Brahmaputra, an agitation which shall be truly national in its character and shall include the varied and diversified races and peoples that inhabit this great country. And I declare I shall cheerfully bear my humble share in this great national work. It matters not who sympathises with us, and who does not. We shall do our duty manfully, fearlessly and courageously. It matters not if we are cried down as "stump orators." It matters not if we are described as "young men ambitious for fame and distinction." It matters not if our motives are misconstrued and we are held up to the ridicule and, it may be, the execration of our European rulers. I repeat, we shall do our duty fearlessly, manfully and courageously. We shall borrow a noble page from England's glorious history, that page wherein are blazoned forth in characters of glittering gold (O God! may the spirit of those words last till the end of time) "England expects every man to do his duty." We shall borrow that page from England's

history, fasten it on our banner, and unfurl that banner before the gaze of our own countrymen and of stagnant Asia. India too expects every man to do his duty.

The Brahmo Samaj may also powerfully help to bring about Indian unity. Amongst the obstacles to national unity, difference of religion occupies not wholly an unimportant place. The Brahmo Samaj, by uniting Indians of varied creeds and beliefs under the bonds of a common faith, may help to remove this great difficulty and foster and promote Indian union. And it seems to me that the Brahmo Samaj possesses special facilities for bringing about this great end. The creed of simple monotheism which it preaches and holds up for our acceptance has in all ages and times possessed an almost irresistible attraction for the minds of thoughtful Indians. But let me not be misunderstood. The Brahmoism which is thus to knit together the varied creeds of India under the bond of a common faith must not be merely the Brahmoism of prayers, of thanksgivings and meditations. It must be the Brahmoism of practical life. It must be that form of Brahmoism which, going deep into the life of the individual, must influence his every-day conduct. It must be that form of Brahmoism, which while inculcating the great principles of the unity and the omniscience of the Deity, will at the same time, teach man that his highest duty is to love his fellow man, to serve him, to work for him and to live and die, if necessary, for his happiness, his prosperity and welfare.

Thus then, gentlemen, it appears that the circumstances under which we live are wholly different from those of ancient India. Any arguments, therefore, founded upon the past of India, can have no application

in the present day, the facts being so different. But if in spite of the arguments I have urged, it should be thought that the consummation of Indian unity must necessarily take such a long time that for all practical purposes it must be pronounced to be impossible of realisation, I ask what possible difficulty would there be to the unification of the interests of the educated classes spread throughout the different parts of India? We are not separated by language; English supplies us with a common medium of communication, and removes one of the great difficulties to national union. I know there are those who would give worlds to create dissensions amongst us. I know there are those who would raise mountain barriers between us, who would interpose an ever widening gulf of bitter animosities between us, who would rend asunder the bonds of sympathy which ought to subsist between us, brothers born of the same mother. And these men would fain be our leaders, our guides, our instructors. I know not how you regard their tricks, but for my part, my feelings towards them are those of pure, simple, unmitigated contempt and abhorrence. Sometime ago an influential journal, published in one of the most important cities in the North-Western Provinces, had an article headed "Bengali Babus and India." Well, in that article the writer remarked that the Bengalis possessed special aptitude to master Law, Medicine and the lower Mathematics. Aye forsooth, the Bengalis possessed some capacity to master *the lower Mathematics*. And the writer ventured to make this statement in the face of the broad fact that there was at least one Bengali gentleman, your worthy President, who passed a most difficult Mathematical examination, perhaps the most difficult in the



world, in a way highly creditable to himself and honourable to his country. Well, the writer in question; after having treated his readers to this most important piece of information, went on to observe that the natives of other parts of India would not have the Bengalis as associates, much less as leaders. Now, gentlemen, I think I speak the sentiments of my educated countrymen, when I say that we Bengalis do not aspire to occupy the position of leaders. We are only anxious that the light which is in us, that the light under which we have basked for so many long years, should spread over the whole of India and chase away that cimmerian darkness which has settled over the intellectual and moral atmosphere of this great country. And I am in a position to give the lie direct to the other part of the statement to which I have referred. Last summer, gentlemen, an important mission carried me through the whole of India, and wherever I went, I was received with open arms and treated as a brother by my countrymen from the banks of the Beas to the briny waters that wash the coast of Madras.

There may thus be a unification of the interests of educated India ; is not such union necessary and desirable ? Have we no grievances to redress ? I do not put this question by way of reflection upon the Government of this country. Every country, however well governed, has its grievances. The French have their grievances, the Germans have their grievances, the Swiss have their grievances, and even the English enjoying the freest institutions in the world have their grievances also. It would indeed have been truly remarkable if a country situated as India is, without the blessings of

representative institutions, had no grievances to redress, no complaints to make. And is it not necessary, in order that we might obtain the redress of our grievances, that the voice of united India should be heard with respect to them? United representations must necessarily carry much greater weight with the English nation and the English Parliament than the prayers of this particular province, or of that particular province. A remarkable unanimity of feeling has already been evoked throughout India, I mean upon the question of the admission of our countrymen into the ranks of the Covenanted Civil Service. All India is of one mind upon this great question. And I am sure that with reference to all other questions affecting national interests, there is a similar unanimity of feeling among the educated classes throughout India.

But, gentlemen, I am not content to allow this question—the desirability and importance of promoting a feeling of sympathy and union between the different modern races and peoples—to rest upon mere intellectual considerations. I desire to place this question upon the exalted basis of the human emotions. Are not all Indians brothers, ought they not then to live and act as brothers? The ground which we tread is holy. Round us sleep our revered sires. Beware how we live in this land. Let us live in it as loving brothers. But if we cannot do so, then do thou, O God of nature I hurl against us the thunders of thy wrath, for by living we desecrate and pollute the memories of our sires.

The cause of Indian unity stands in need of missionaries. No cause has ever prospered which has not had its missionaries, its apostles and prophets. The cause of Italian unity had its apostles and prophets, its

Garibaldi and its Mazzinis. Who will be the Garibaldi and Mazzini of Indian unity? Who amongst us will emulate their self-sacrifice, their matchless patriotism, their unflinching devotion to the interests of their country? Their revolutionary spirit is not indeed needed for the benefit of India. The march of progress which has already commenced under English auspices must not be disturbed. May England long continue to rule India for the glory of England and the benefit of India. But we want the inspiration to noble actions to be derived from the blessed names and sanctified examples of the immortal apostles of Italian unity. I repeat, who will be the apostles of Indian unity?

Young men, whom I see around me in such large numbers, you are the hopes of your families. May I not also say, you are the hopes of your country. Your country expects great things from you. Now I ask, how many of you are prepared, when you have finished your studies at the college, to devote your lives, to consecrate your energies to the good of your country? I repeat the question and I pause for a reply. (Here the speaker paused for a few seconds. Cries of "*all, all*" from all sides of the gallery). The response is in every way worthy of yourselves and of the education which you are receiving. May you prove true to your resolve, and carry out in life the high purposes which animate your bosoms.

Gentlemen, I have a strong conviction and an assured belief that there comes a time in the history of a nation's progress, when every man may verily be said to have a mission of his own to accomplish. Such a time has now arrived for India. The fiat has gone forth. The celestial mandate has been issued that every Indian

must now do his duty, or stand condemned before God and man. There was such a time of stirring activity in the glorious annals of England, when Hampden offered up his life for the deliverance of his country, when Algernon Sydney laid down his head on the block to rid his country of a hated tyrant, when English bishops did not hesitate in the discharge of their duty to their Fatherland to descend from the performance of their ecclesiastical functions and appear as traitors before the bar of a Criminal Court. These are glorious reminiscences in England's immortal history, which Englishmen to this day look back upon with pride and satisfaction. It is not indeed necessary for us to have recourse to violence in order to obtain the redress of our grievances. Constitutional agitation will secure for us those rights, the privileges which in less favoured countries are obtained by sterner means. But peaceful as are the means to be enforced, there is a stern duty to be performed by every Indian. And he who fails in that duty is a traitor before God and man.

In holding up for your acceptance the great principle of Indian unity, I do not lay any claims to originality. Three hundred years ago, in the Punjab, the immortal founder of Sikhism, the meek, the gentle, the blessed Nanak preached the great doctrine of Indian unity and endeavoured to knit together Hindus and Musulmans under the banner of a common faith. That attempt was eminently successful. Nanak became the spiritual founder of the Sikh Empire. He preached the great doctrine of peace and good will between Hindus and Musulmans. And standing in the presence of his great example, we too must preach the great doctrine of peace and good will between Hindus and Musulmans,

Christians and Parsees, aye between all sections of the great Indian community. Let us raise aloft the banner of our country's progress. Let the word "Unity" be inscribed there in characters of glittering gold. We have had enough of past jealousies, past dissensions, past animosities. The spirits of the dead at Paniput will testify to our bloody strifes. The spirits of the dead in other battle-fields will testify to the same fact. There may be religious differences between us. There may be social differences between us. But there is a common platform where we may all meet, the platform of our country's welfare. There is a common cause which may bind us together, the cause of Indian progress. There is a common Divinity, to whom we may uplift our voices in adoration, the Divinity who presides over the destinies of our country. In the name then of a common country, let us all, Hindus, Musulmans, Christians, Parsees, members of the great Indian community, throw the pall of oblivion over jealousies and dissensions of by-gone times and embracing one another in fraternal love and affection, live and work for the benefit of a beloved Fatherland. Under English auspices there is indeed a great future for India. I am confident of the great destinies that are in store for us. You and I may not live to see that day. These eyes of ours may not witness that spectacle of ineffable beauty. It may not be permitted to us to exclaim Simeonlike, "Now Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." It may not be permitted to us to exclaim like the Welsh Bard on the heights of Snowdon, "Visions of glory, spare my aching sight." But is it nothing to know when you are dying, when you are about to take leave of this world, of its joys and sorrows, when the

past of your life is unfurled before you, when eternity opens wide its portals, is it nothing to know at that last awful, supreme moment of your lives, that you have not lived in vain, that you have lived for the benefit of others, that you have lived to help in the cause of your country's regeneration ? Let us all lead worthy, honourable and patriotic lives, that we may all live and die happily and that India may be great. This is my earnest and prayerful request. May it find a response in your sympathetic hearts.

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## THE VERNACULAR PRESS ACT.

*[A public Meeting was held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on the 17th April 1878, to consider the desirability of petitioning Parliament, on the subject of the Vernacular Press Act. The first Resolution having been moved, seconded, and adopted, Babu Surendranath Banerjea on rising to move the Second Resolution spoke as follows.]*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to move the Second Resolution. The Resolution runs as follows :—

That having regard to the devoted loyalty and attachment of the people of India to the British Crown, to which willing and ungrudging testimony has from time to time been borne by many high and distinguished authorities both here and in England, to the peace and contentment that reign throughout the country, this meeting desires to record its emphatic opinion that a repressive and retrograde measure like the Vernacular Press Act is unnecessary and uncalled for, and is opposed to the interests of justice as it altogether dispenses with the usual safeguards of judicial investigation, and substitutes in their place the discretionary authority of executive officers.

Gentlemen, the Resolution which I have just read speaks of the devoted loyalty and attachment of the people of this country to the British Crown. It is rather a matter of regret that at this time of day, after having lived for more than a century under the fostering influences of English rule and English civilization, the task should have devolved upon us to speak on the subject of our loyalty, and not only that, but that it should also be necessary that we should endeavour to establish our loyalty by unimpeachable facts and unassailable

arguments. But the necessity clearly exists. The new Act is a direct slur upon our loyalty. Where would have been the necessity for such an Act in the midst of a contented, happy, and above all a loyal people? Therefore, I repeat, gentlemen, the Act is a direct reproach, and a reflection upon our loyalty. The question, therefore, is, are we loyal, or are we not? Before I proceed to offer any observation on this most important subject, it becomes necessary that I should hasten to draw a distinction. Loyalty to the Crown is to be distinguished from subserviency, from obsequiousness, to this officer or that officer. We may criticise the measures of Government. We may criticise the acts of individual officers; but such criticisms are not incompatible with allegiance to British rule in this country. The question then is, are we loyal, or are we not? Are we wanting in loyalty, in dutiful homage, unswerving allegiance to the throne of her who rules over this country, whose matchless purity of character, whose generosity of disposition, whose keen and ardent interest in the welfare of her Indian subjects have created in our minds the highest respect for her person, and have planted deep her throne in the affection of the teeming millions of this country. Gentlemen, I put the question, are we wanting in loyalty to this great, wise, virtuous, beneficent ruler—our beloved Empress? Let us appeal to facts. If we are to be condemned, let it not be upon vague generalities, upon more assumptions, upon futile theories. You are all, gentlemen, familiar with the well-known maxim of English law,—“The King can do no wrong.” This is no more a cardinal maxim of English law than it represents a principle implanted deep in the inborn instinct of the



Indian races and peoples. We are essentially a loyal people. By instinct, by tradition, by association, we are loyal. With us the King is a semi-divine personage. He is the embodiment of justice, purity and truth. Given to the performance of his pledges, he claims the unconditional homage of his subjects. And some of the greatest of our poets—those master delineators of the prevailing sentiments of the age in which they lived,—have clothed this feeling in suitable form and appropriate diction. Valmiki has taken advantage of this feeling in his immortal poem of the Ramayana. Witness the burst of grief that overpowers the good citizens of Ayodhya when their beloved heir-apparent Rama, accompanied by his devoted consort, leaves the home of his father to retire into the wilderness. Witness again the wailings, the lamentations, the dolorous cries of mourning that fill the air on the death of the aged monarch, Dasaratha. Witness the transport of joy, the manifestations of rejoicings, that fill all hearts, when Rama returns home to take possession of the throne of his father. I say we are essentially a loyal people, and however much English education might have revolutionized our mental constitution; it has not abated by one atom that character for deep and intense loyalty which has marked the history of our race from the earliest times. Gentlemen, you have all read of the Pindari War, that war which England undertook in the first quarter of this century in the interests of civilization, to rid the country of those Pindari robbers the eternal enemies of progress and good government. When that great war was raging, when its flames had covered the firmament with their lurid glare, there was not a house, there was not a domestic circle which did not offer up

its prayers to the God of battles, invoking his blessings for the success of British arms. This fact appears from a petition which the Native community sent up to the Supreme Court in 1823. Our fathers prayed for the triumph of British arms, aye, the fathers of those who have met here to-night to vindicate their character for loyalty, and to hurl back with scorn and indignation the charge which is sought to be brought home to them—that they are disloyal and faithless to that Government under whose protecting shadows they have enjoyed the inestimable blessing of security of life and property, and have made such rapid strides in civilization and enlightenment. Great God ! was it reserved to our lot that we should have to vindicate our character for loyalty, in the face of these instances of devoted allegiance to the British crown ?

Passing over the Afghan War, we come to the dark days of the Indian Mutiny. It is essentially a military revolt, with which the people at large had no sympathy, and from which they sedulously kept themselves aloof. Not only did they not sympathise with that revolt, not only did they resist the temptation of joining their countrymen in arms against the British Government, but when the hour came, they manfully stood by their English rulers, and rendered them important services. How many daring feats of valour were performed by the native soldiery, in arms against their own countrymen and in support of British supremacy ; how numerous, how manifold were the services, rendered by native gentlemen for the maintenance of the existing order of things ? Doe Narain Sing does not live, but we invoke his shade to bear witness to his trials and sufferings, his gigantic exertions to crush out the seeds of rebellion and

restore peace and order. But for the memorable services of that great man, the last vestige of British power would, in the days of the Mutiny, have disappeared from the sacred and ancient city of the Hindus. Those were days when loyalty displayed itself the greatest advantage, and was appreciated most.

Now, gentlemen, let me draw your attention to a recent illustration of the same principle. Do the annals of a subject race present an instance of loyalty more cordial, genuine, earnest and enthusiastic than that with which the Prince of Wales was welcomed, when he did us the distinguished honour of visiting India? That manifestation of loyalty elicited from His Royal Highness the warmest expression of his heartfelt satisfaction and approbation. Is there a nobler instance of loyalty than that which was displayed on the occasion of the Delhi Assemblage? While Englishmen were wrangling about the propriety of calling their Queen-Empress; while they were discussing, with no small amount of warmth and ardour, the constitutional question involved in this change of name, the people of India, from the Himalayas to the Comorin, from the Brahmaputra to the Indus, assembled by their tens of thousands in the capital cities of their provinces and districts to exchange congratulations and compliments, and to invoke the blessing of God on the new relationship which it had pleased Her Majesty to assume as regards her Indian subjects. These, gentlemen, are some instances of loyalty, which might be adduced in refutation of the charge which has been laid against us. But fortunately, loyal as we are, our loyalty has received recognition from persons of the highest position, not excluding Her Most Gracious Majesty the Empress

herself. I, therefore, beg to be allowed to read extracts testifying to our loyalty in the most glowing terms. I shall begin with the testimony of Lord Canning. I hold in my hand a book which contains a letter written to the late Maharajah Shirish Chunder Roy Bahadoor of Nuddea. The letter is dated 17th of December 1857. Thus writes the Home Secretary to the Maharajah :—

The Governor-General in Council wishes you to rest assured that the Government of India will not forget, that England will not forget, that, if unhappily the mutineers and rebels of India are to be reckoned by thousands, the peaceful and loyal subjects of the Queen in India are numbered by millions

This is the testimony of that kind and humane Governor-General whose sense of justice and fairness has made his name a household word with us.

The next will be an extract from a message which Her Imperial Majesty was pleased to send to the Viceroy on the 1st of January 1877 :—

We have witnessed with heartfelt satisfaction the reception which they have accorded to our beloved son, and have been touched by the evidence of their loyalty and attachment to our House and Throne.

This then is the testimony of that gracious, wise and good sovereign who rules over us. Lord Lytton was pleased to speak in similar terms, when the deputation from the Native Press Association waited upon His Excellency, on the auspicious occasion of the Delhi Assemblage. I have not been able to lay my hand upon the extract, but I was one of those who composed the deputation, so I am able to speak to the testimony His Lordship was pleased to bear. I shall, in the next place, read an extract from the administration Report of Bengal for 1875-76.

This is what Sir Richard Temple says :—

At heart and in the truest and best sense, the Bengalis are thoroughly loyal. In this respect there are not in all British India better subjects of the Crown. And, under all circumstances, adverse or propitious, they evince a steady, industrious and law-abiding spirit which must command regard and esteem from every Englishman who knows them.

The remarks apply to Bengal alone, for Sir Richard was at the time Lieutenant-Governor of these Provinces. Gentlemen, if time allowed, I might produce such an array of extracts, testifying to our loyalty, as might detain you here all night.

We are then loyal, and ungrudging testimony to our loyalty has been borne by persons in the highest positions. But the Resolution also speaks of the peace and contentment that reign throughout the length and breadth of the country. There is peace; none can gainsay that. But, perhaps, it will not be so readily admitted, that there is contentment reigning throughout the country. Talk of contentment in the face of that rising at Surat; why, the people were in arms against the authorities only the other day, in one of the most important cities in the Western Presidency, and how could it then be maintained that the people are contented? I say, there is contentment as regards the *existence* of British rule in this country, though we may complain of the particular manner in which the administration is occasionally carried on. I do not believe that there is a single native of India who does not wish, from the bottom of his heart, that the English rule might continue long, for the benefit of India and the glory of England. We know full well the immense and endless debt of gratitude we owe to England. We know full well the incalculable blessings which English rule

has been the means of conferring upon the people of this country. The English rule in this country is essentially a progressive rule. The Government of to-day is not the Government of 25 years back. What were the dreams of our fathers are realities with us. What are our fondest hopes and aspirations will be the cherished privileges with those who come after us and live to enjoy the benefits of British rule. We are loyal, we are contented. Why, then, bursts upon our heads this bolt of thunder in a cloudless sky !

It has been remarked by the immortal founder of modern jurisprudence that every law is an evil. It is an infringement of the natural liberty of man, an encroachment upon his innate rights and privileges. It, therefore, becomes the bounden duty of those who introduce any measure of law, to justify it by facts and arguments. Much more is this duty incumbent on those who introduce a repressive measure of legislation, like the one under discussion. Therefore, we are driven to the conclusion, that it is for Government to prove that the Act is necessary, and not for us to show that the Act is unnecessary and uncalled for. It must also be said, in justice to the Government, that they have made out the strongest case possible under the circumstances, and have brought forward all the facts and arguments in support of their position. But what are they ? Let us examine the facts. The justification of Government is contained in the speeches of Hon'ble Members, the statement of objects and reasons, and above all, in the translation of extracts from the vernacular journals. I hold these extracts in my hand. The main objects of the law, as stated in the first paragraph of the statement of objects and reasons, is to empower the Government

to suppress seditious writings more effectually than is practicable under the present law. Sir Alexander Arbuthnot remarks that, within the last three or four years, there has been a steady increase in the number of seditious writings in the vernacular papers, and that the evil has become worse than ever within the last 12 months. Thus it has become necessary to pass a special law on the subject. But the question at once occurs, is there not already a section in the Penal Code to repress sedition? Why, we all remember that in the year 1870, when Sir Fitz-James Stephen was Law-member of the Supreme Council, a section was added to the Penal Code, defining disaffection and punishing sedition. But that law is pronounced to be inefficient. I ask, have you tried it? Have you experimented with it? Have there been prosecutions under it? Have editors of vernacular papers been charged under its special provision? If not, what right have you to assume that the law is inefficient? And, if inefficient and unworkable, why not rather amend and improve it than introduce a new law? But, gentlemen, the Government has strong objections to prosecute editors of vernacular papers for sedition, under the Penal Code. It has, therefore, thought fit to introduce this special law. Its grounds are not many. The chief of them runs somewhat as follows:—The ordinary criminal law *punishes* an offender after the crime has been committed; the special law seeks to *prevent* the commission of an offence. The Government wants to *prevent*, not to *punish*. Hence the special law. Gentlemen, I invite your attention to the terms of this argument, for upon this argument, rests the entire superstructure of the Act. The ordinary criminal law *punishes*. This special law *prevents*. I must

at once pause to point out the fallacy of this reasoning, which seeks to draw a distinction between the criminal law that *punishes* and the criminal law that *prevents*. Why does the criminal law *punish*? Is it not to *prevent* the commission of an offence? The end and aim of the ordinary criminal law, therefore, is to *prevent*. The end and aim of the special law is likewise to *prevent*. What need is there, then, for the special law? But the analogy does not stop here. The *modus operandi* is in both cases the same. The ordinary criminal law prevents by means of punishment. The special law prevents also by means of punishment. For that law contemplates that the offending editor will be deterred from writing seditious articles through fear of forfeiting his bail bond, which amounts to a fine, and which is therefore a punishment. Hence it will appear that the end and aim of the ordinary criminal law is precisely the same as that of the special law, and the *modus operandi* is the same in both the cases. What necessity—what justification then is there, I ask, for this law?

There is another argument adduced in support of the measure. The Government is anxious to prevent the dissemination of the poison of sedition. If prosecutions for sedition were instituted under the Penal Code, the poisonous matter complained of, would be quoted in the various papers, and *that* would help to disseminate the poison. But what, then, if the poison were allowed to disseminate? Why, the safety of the State, says Government, requires that the poison should not be allowed to spread. The supreme law of the safety of the State is invoked, and we are asked to fall down before this dread divinity and to hold our tongues in



sullen silence. If the safety of the State required such a law, I am sure, my countrymen would gladly vote in favour of it. But I ask, was there ever a time in which the question of the safety of the State was more narrowly and anxiously considered than in the dark days of the Indian Mutiny? In those dark days, when the country was in flames, when the British Empire was tottering to its foundations, when the contagion of rebellion was spreading like wild-fire over an American prairie; in those dark, stern and awful days, Lord Canning and his Council thought nothing of disseminating the poison, but boldly came forward when it became necessary to prosecute certain vernacular editors who had been guilty of writing seditious libels. In 1857, the editor of the *Durbin*, the editor of the *Samachar Sudhabarsan*, the editor of the *Sullan-ul-Akhbar* were prosecuted by Lord Canning for sedition. In those dark days of the mutiny, when the political system was most prone to succumb to the deadening effects of this poison, it had vitality enough to resist its baneful influences. And now we are told in times of comparative peace, contentment, and prosperity, and with a loyal and law-abiding people, that the gigantic fabric of British Empire, this colossal and imperial structure, resting upon the willing allegiance, the steadfast loyalty and the fervent devotion of two hundred and fifty millions of human beings, stands in danger of being wrecked and ruined by the miserable pratings of a few vernacular editors, who might take it into their heads to indite articles, not the most temperate or the most respectful towards the Government.

But there is another argument which, in the opinion of Government, makes it necessary that the poison should

not be allowed to disseminate. It is assumed that the readers of vernacular papers are ignorant and uncultivated men, upon whose minds the seditious criticisms of the vernacular papers would have a most fatal and prejudicial effect, and sap the foundations of their loyalty. A paternal Government must protect them, and hence the law. Now, I beg most distinctly to affirm that the readers of vernacular papers are not thoughtless, ignorant and uncultivated men. They are, for the most part, educated men. Primary education was introduced into our country only the other day, and we have not yet reached that state of blessedness, devoutly to be wished for, when the Bengal ploughman may be seen ploughing with the one hand, and holding the *Sulava Samachar* in the other. The vast masses of our people still continue in the grovelling depths of profound ignorance. They read no newspaper, vernacular or otherwise. It is educated people who read them. The *Hindu Patriot* confirms this view of the matter, and so does the *Indian Mirror*; and the *Shahachar*, whose mournful loss we deplored the other day, in that farewell letter of his which we all read with such melancholy interest, distinctly stated that all its readers were educated men and did not come from the uncultivated classes. But there is a higher authority yet who supports this view of the matter. Sir Richard Temple says as follows in his Administration Report for 1874-75 (p. 481) :—

Generally speaking, it may be said that the Vernacular Press has little or no influence on the majority of the people, who are agriculturists and labourers. *They do not see newspapers and are not influenced by them, either directly or indirectly.*

The arguments, then, upon which this measure of legislation is based, have fallen through, and the measure

stands before us, in all its naked deformity, unjustified and unaccounted for.

But I contend that the law is unnecessary, and that the vernacular papers are not disloyal. A grave charge has been brought against the Vernacular Press, *viz.*, that it is disloyal. This charge is broadly made. It runs through the speeches of the Hon'ble Members of the Council. It has, therefore, become necessary that we should discuss this question at length. I must crave the indulgence of this meeting to be allowed to confine my observations to the extracts from the Bengali papers, because I have not yet had time to compare the Urdu extracts with their originals. It is not for one moment to be supposed, that I do not sympathize with the vernacular editors of Upper India in their sore distress and trial. My heart bleeds as much for them, aye, indeed much more profusely than it does for the editors of Bengal, for they are poor, helpless, and alone in their trial, with no influentially organised association; with no powerful representative body to help them in this awful crisis. But the great God who helps the distressed will help them too. The cause of justice is their cause; the cause of truth is their cause, and that cause will, in the end, triumph. Let me, gentlemen, begin with the remark that these extracts range over a period of twelve months, and are confined to the year 1877. There may be one or two extracts of December 1876, and one or two of January 1878, but, for all practical purposes, we may assume that the extracts are confined to the year 1877. The question at once occurs, what was the condition of the Bengali papers before 1877? Was their tone loyal or disloyal? Let us examine facts. Let me begin with the year 1874-75, when Sir Richard Temple was the

Lieutenant-Governor of these provinces. Sir Richard Temple, in his Administration Report for 1874-75, remarks as follows with reference to the tone of the Bengali Press :—

I have accordingly paid due attention to this subject, and my general conclusion is decidedly favourable in respect to the loyalty and good-will of the Bengali Press towards the British Crown and nation, and towards the British rule in the main.

Later on, he says :—

The case on behalf of the British is put by the Bengali Press with a warmth and an impressiveness hardly ever surpassed, and seldom equalled by zealous advocates among ourselves.

In the following year, Sir Richard Temple sees no reason to change his opinion on the subject. In the Administration Report for 1875-76, he says :—

The Vernacular Press maintains the same general tone as characterized it last year, and the Lieutenant-Governor sees no reason to modify the expression of opinion which was placed on record in the Administration Report for 1874-75.

Let us now come to the time when Sir George Campbell was Lieutenant-Governor. Now, in considering the opinion of that distinguished authority, we must bear in mind that he was violently abused by the Bengali Press—in short, he was the best abused man of his time. Now Sir George Campbell says, in his Administration Report for 1872-73, that the Bengali Press is not really bad at heart. Thus then for the two or three years preceding the year 1877, the tone of the Vernacular Press of Bengal was not only not hostile and seditious, but was absolutely loyal to the Government. Has it then all on a sudden become seditious? There is a break in the chain of continued development. To-day the Vernacular Press is loyal and respectful to the Government. To-morrow's sun dawns

upon it, and all on a sudden, down goes its character for loyalty, and it becomes seditious, disloyal, spreading the taint and pollution of treason throughout the length and breadth of the land, and it becomes necessary to produce a Gagging Act. This simple fact, this break in the chain of continuity, makes us hesitate to believe in the correctness of this charge of sedition against the Vernacular Press, and, as we wade through the extracts, we find this suspicion all the more strongly confirmed. From the last Administration Report, we learn, that there are thirty-five vernacular papers in Bengal; the so-called seditious extracts have been made from fifteen papers. I say "so called" advisedly, because the extracts are not really seditious. Out of the fifteen papers from which extracts have been made, one, the *Samaj Darpan*, has ceased to exist for the last six or seven months. The gentleman who edited this paper received a notice from the Commissioner of Police, the other day, to enter into a bailbond for the good behaviour of his paper. Poor unfortunate editor! Little did he know that the obloquy of having once edited a vernacular paper would stick to him through life, and that months after he had quietly buried his journal in its grave, its spectral form would once again rise and haunt him like the ghastly phantom of another world. There are fourteen papers then from which thirty-two extracts have been made, excluding four from the *Samaj Darpan*. Now, I contend, that several of these translations are misleading. I shall only instance three. I shall begin with an extract from the *Sadharani* of the 4th of March 1877, which speaks of the Fennua trial:—"It neither bespeaks," says the extract, "a cultivated taste, nor is it agreeable, to have constantly to write

against Government. But in view of the arbitrary acts which have become common in these days, we should be wanting in our duty if we passed them over without any protest. The people were hitherto proud of the justice administered in the High Court. In seeking to shield a rash, oppressive, and unprincipled European Civilian, Government has now brought that Court into contempt, and has struck a blow at the root of British justice. Government has thus worked its own ruin ; and if after this the people are found to express discontent, the Anglo-Indian editors will brand the Bengalis with such epithets as ungrateful, disloyal, scurrilous, and what not." The translator has done injustice to the editor by omitting a passage which occurs in the same article, and the effect of which is to mollify the sense of the whole. The passage translated runs as follows :—

But it will not do for us to remain quiet any longer : there is no justice in the country ; *now for sometime we must create an agitation on this subject in the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland.*

Could there be anything more loyal, anything showing greater confidence in the integrity, and honesty of purpose of the British nation and the British Legislature than the extract which I have just quoted. Justice may not be obtained in this country, but England will do us justice, so says the extract.

The next quotation will be from the *Shoma Prokash* of the 26th of February 1877. I may here add that I quote extracts from those papers only which have the greatest influence and circulation :—

The assertion so frequently made by our rulers that they never act contrary to law is seen to be utterly groundless, when we contemplate the illegal acts of Mr. Kirkwood, and the

arbitrary treatment which Baboo Lal Chand experienced at his hands. We are at such moments led to question the use of the Legislative Councils, the maintenance of which costs so much to India, and the equally expensive offices of Viceroy and Lieutenant-Governor. For what is the use of them when the officers in the Mofussil are all in all? They are the Viceroy and the Lieutenant-Governor; they are the Legislative Councils; their orders are law, and their acts furnish the rules, and their will is Government. Natives are wrong in regarding indigo planters as oppressors. These oppressors cannot compare with Kirkwood and his *confreres*. If oppressions are necessary to the promotion of self-interest, the planters pledge themselves to resort to this means. Kirkwood and his brother officials (who ought to be officials of the same type) do the same, though they are sworn to put a stop to oppression.

Here is also an important omission, for in the very same article there are lines which translated run thus :—

Now we are eager to hear the opinion of the Governor-General on this subject. His sense of justice has been clearly shown by his impartial minute on the Fuller case.

Now, I ask, could anything show greater confidence in the impartiality and sense of justice of the present Viceroy.

The third and the last extract will be from the *Shahachar*. I can scarcely conceal the feelings of indignation that rise in my bosom, when I come to speak of the manner in which the extract has been made up. The extract is not the translation of any connected paragraph or article, but is made up of lines apparently taken at random. The *Shahachar* of the 2nd July writes the following in the course of an editorial, headed the Strength and Duty of England.

There are many points of resemblance noticeable between England and Carthage of the ancient times. In wealth, naval

and commercial supremacy, and in military skill, both are alike. Carthage fell, and the causes which brought about her fall are in full operation in England at the present day. The fall of Carthage was due to her fighting with mercenary troops and the existence of fierce factions among the leaders of her people. Does not England present the same spectacle to-day? She is, like Carthage, the home of liberty, and, like her, she is an eyesore to all despotic Governments. The supremacy of England in naval warfare is, however, now a matter of question, while it is almost certain that on land she is no match for the army of any of the great Powers of Europe. The present is a critical time for her, possessed as she is of influence, but without adequate resources of war.

Now there is a most important omission in connection with this extract. There occurs in this very article, a passage full of the most devoted loyalty and of good feeling to the English nation and the English Government, and which, curiously enough, does not appear in the translated extract. The passage runs as follows :—

It is not because we are the subjects of England that we desire to see her great and powerful. Read the annals of the human race. *No age, no country, has ever witnessed any system of administration or government like that of the British. The downfall of the British Empire will be the precursor of many evils to the human race.*

Before I take leave of the *Shahachar* I may point out to the meeting a passage full of loyalty which occurs in another article, which is in the same issue, from which the condemned extract has been made. The passage runs as follows :—

We are the grateful subjects of Her Imperial Majesty. It is our incessant prayer that Her rule should be preserved intact.

It is upon extracts such as I have read to you that the Act is founded, and it is for you to consider whether an Act which rests upon extracts of this nature is justifiable



or not. I may say that not one of the extracts made from the Bengali papers is seditious. Let me read an extract from the *Bharat Sanskarak* of 3rd September 1877 :—

The *Bharat Sanskarak* observes with regret, says the extract, Government has only two means, both imperfect and incorrect, of judging the tone of the native newspapers. These are—(1) the weekly report which is often a mistranslation of the views of native editors ; and (2) the representations made to Government by men like Kirkwood, which cannot but be of a hostile character. Under these circumstances it has become a matter of consideration with Native editors how to keep the Government informed of the true views maintained on public questions by the vernacular newspapers. The Native Press Association should now be up and doing.

Now I ask, could anything be more loyal, temperate and respectful to the Government than what is stated in the above extract ? The Advocate-General has taken the trouble of classifying the heads under which the several extracts may be placed. It would be interesting to know under which of those heads the extract I have quoted would come. The Vernacular Press is therefore not seditious. The Act, therefore, is entirely unjustifiable. It has been remarked by Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, in the course of his speech, that Sir Thomas Munro was against a free Press. Sir Alexander quotes Munro's minute dated 1822, but he says that he does not rely upon it. It is as well that Sir Alexander does not rely upon this minute. Sir Thomas Munro is opposed to a free Press, on what ground ? Because he thought that the writings of a Free Native Press would have a most prejudicial effect on the minds of the Indian soldiery. It is not even pretended that the articles of the Vernacular Press are helping to create disaffection in the

minds of the native soldiery. I, therefore, say that it is well that Sir Alexander does not rely on Sir Thomas Munro's minute. But Sir Alexander has likewise cited the authority of Metcalfe and Macaulay, in support of the new Gagging Act. I am bound to remark that the honourable member has not done justice to Sir Charles Metcalfe. Sir Charles, no doubt, contemplated the possibility of circumstances arising, which might make it necessary to impose restrictions upon the liberty of the Press. But he thought that *temporary or local restraints* would be sufficient to meet any case of emergency. Lord Canning and his Council understood Sir Charles Metcalfe's minute in this sense, as may be gathered from their Despatch to the Court of Directors, on the subject of the Gagging Act of 1857. Metcalfe said, in reply to the address presented to him by the people of Calcutta :—

I entirely concur with you in the desire which you entertain that if, at any time, actual danger should render necessary, *temporary or local restraints* on the liberty of the Press, the precautions applied by the Legislature may be only commensurate to the real exigency, and that no restrictions may be made permanent beyond those which are necessary to ensure responsibility ; and I trust that all legislation, with a view to protect the community against licentiousness, will be in the true spirit of liberty.

While speaking on this subject, I cannot help remarking upon the manner in which the Act is being worked. When the Bill became law, everybody thought it would be kept suspended like the sword of Damocles over the devoted heads of the vernacular editors. But, at last, these hopes have been blasted. Already several editors of vernacular papers have been called upon to furnish security. Such demand

has been made from the *Bharat Mihir* of Mymensingh; from the *Dacca Prokash* and *Hindoo Hitoyisin* of Dacca, from the *Sulava Samachar* and the *Shahachar* of this city. And I ask, what offence have these papers been guilty of since the passing of the Act. We know of no offence which they have committed. Is the law then to have a retrospective effect? This call for security has told with fatal effect upon one at least of these papers. The *Shahachar* has ceased to exist. And I have no doubt a similar fate will soon overtake many other vernacular papers. Gentlemen, there has been some irregularity in the practical working of the Act. Section 3 requires that it is the Magistrate who must take the initiative in calling upon editors to furnish security. But in the case of at least three papers, it is the Lieutenant-Governor who has taken the initiative, and has called upon the Magistrate through the Commissioner of the Division, to require the editors to enter into their bail-bonds.

It is melancholy to contrast the manner in which the Gagging Act of 1857 was enforced, with the manner in which the present Vernacular Press Act is being worked. The Gagging Act of 1857 was a much milder piece of legislation than the Press Act of 1878. Mild as it was, it was worked with far greater moderation and forbearance. Let me illustrate this by an instance. On the 23rd of June 1857, the *Friend of India* published an article, headed the Centenary of Plassey. The Governor-General was of opinion that it contained objectionable remarks. A warning was sent round to the editor. He took no notice of the warning. He published an article in the next issue of his paper, in much more violent language, in reckless defiance of the warning that had

been sent. But even then, the forbearing Governor-General, whose memory we all cherish with so much respect, did not withdraw his license, but on receiving an assurance from the proprietor of the *Friend of India*, that such objectionable matter would not be allowed to appear in its future issues, forgave the peccant journalist, and allowed the license to continue. A similar act of forbearance was shown as regards a letter which appeared in the *Bengal Hurkara* of the 13th September 1857, and this forbearance was shown at a time when it was a matter of question whether stern severity should not take the place of mercy and moderation.

It has been remarked, that the fact of the English Press having supported the Act ought to silence all criticism. I yield to none in my appreciation of the character for moderation, wisdom, and fairness which so eminently distinguishes the Press of England. The English Press, however, has decided the question *ex parte*, has not heard both sides of the case, and has certainly not heard the case for the defence. The English Press has likewise countenanced the Act, under a sense of imperious necessity. They are under the impression that the country is ripe for revolt, and that the seditious writings of the vernacular journals constitute a source of danger to the empire. But yet we are not without hopes of being able to appeal with success to the generous instincts of the English people. Our hopes and our confidence have been strengthened by what has already taken place in the House of Commons. Before a breath of complaint was heard here, before a word of protest was publicly raised in this country, those ardent advocates of human freedom and of liberty of speech, had already called in question, in the House of Commons,

the wisdom, the policy and the justice of this most objectionable law. The question is, indeed, not an Indian question. It is essentially an English question. The question is not whether a certain number of Indians should have the right of free speech. The question is broader, vaster, deeper, far. The question is whether in any part of the British dominions, whether in any part of the world where floats the free flag of England—the flag which has “braved the battle and the breeze,” the flag which has stood forth in all ages and in all climes as the beacon of human freedom and human progress—the question is whether in any part of the world acknowledging British rule, restrictions should be imposed upon the liberty of speech of any portion of Her Majesty’s subjects. We claim this privilege not as a matter of favour. We are no longer the conquered subjects of England. We are the incorporated citizens of a free empire. Has not our Sovereign been graciously pleased to assume the title of Empress? And was not the act of assumption celebrated amid circumstances of pomp and splendour, which have left a deep and ineffaceable impression upon the minds of the Indian races and peoples? Was that act of assumption, of sacred incorporation, a fact or a myth? I appeal to the princes, the chiefs, and the people of India—to the high officials who were present on that occasion—to bear witness to the solemnity of that ceremony and the sanctity of the pledges that were then given. We are British subjects, and are we to be deprived of an inalienable right of British subjects, in this summary and perfunctory manner? The Act is against the instincts of Englishmen, is against the genius of the British Constitution. The history of England is the history of freedom. It is the

history of one long, continued, sustained effort to succour the distressed and to uphold the cause of oppressed nationalities. I cannot, for one moment, induce myself to believe that a nation so firmly wedded to the principles of justice and freedom, will sanction a measure which deprives a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects of an important privilege and an inestimable boon, which Englishmen prize above all things. It is England that has introduced into our midst the lamp of knowledge. Will she now put out that lamp with her own hands, and plunge us again into the depths of Cimmerian darkness? Under English influence, India was waked to life. Under English auspices, the pulse of life is beating fast within her. But the present Act has prostrated, paralysed, and overpowered her. Let us then appeal to the representatives of England, the custodians of her honour, the repositories of her name and fame, to repeal this objectionable law, to avert a great calamity from our country, and thus perform an act of duty which would redound to the glory of England and enhance that love, that respect, that veneration, which we all feel for the fair fame of England and her spotless name.

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## THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE.

*[A meeting of the inhabitants of Calcutta was held at the Town Hall on Wednesday, the 29th January, 1887 to consider the best means for the best way of commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of Her Gracious Majesty's most beneficent reign. Among the speakers were H. H. the Nawab Bahadur of Moorshedabad, H. H. the Maharaja of Cuck Behar, Raja Rajendra Lala Millra, LL.D. Maharaja Sir Fotindra Mohun Tagore, K.C.S.I., Sir W. W. Hunter, K.C.S.I., LL.D., Sir H. L. Harrison, K.C.S.I., Nawab Abdul Latcef Khan Bahadur, C.I.E., Raja Rajendra Narain Deb, the Hon'ble Mr. Amir Ali, and others. The Hon'ble Sir Rivers Thompson, the then Lieutenant-Governor, was in the Chair. Babu Surendranath Banerjee, in supporting the fourth Resolution, spoke as follows :—]*

YOUR HONOUR AND GENTLEMEN,

I do indeed deem it a great privilege to be allowed to take a part in the proceedings of this meeting. I belong to that party in Indian politics (and I make no secret of my faith) which has been identified with the political agitations of the last few years ; and we want to make it clear on this auspicious occasion of the Jubilee—we want to proclaim from one part of the country to the other in terms that shall not be mistaken—that to whatever party we may belong—whether Liberals or Conservatives in Indian politics—whatever creed we may profess—whatever nationality may claim us as its own—whether we are Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Parsees or Sikhs, we are all united by one common, all-pervading sentiment of gratitude to that throne, from whose

beneficence we enjoy the choicest of earthly blessings, and from whose justice and liberality, we anticipate the fruition of those hopes which represent the hopes of civilization and humanity. Deep in our gratitude, unswerving in our loyalty, to the Hindu mind the throne is the embodiment of the highest virtues. In the words of the greatest of our epic poets, "the King is the truth of the truth-teller, the virtue of the virtuous, the dignity of the dignified, the lord, master, protector of the needy; the indigent and the helpless." In honouring the Sovereign, in adoring his personality, we but render homage to those princely qualities which his office represents. There is no name in ancient Indian history which excites such love or such pious reverence as that of Rama, the lord of Ajudhya; and Rama stands forth before the Indian world as the incarnation of the noblest kingly virtues. The brave in war, the generous in peace, the sagacious in council, the obedient son, the devoted husband, the affectionate brother, the name of this warrior-king strikes the tenderest chord in the heart of every true-born Hindu. Our loyalty thus based upon the possession of the moral virtues transcends considerations of race and religion, and we freely offered our homage to the greatest of the Mohamedan Princes, to the illustrious Akbar and his illustrious descendants, and our poets sang :—*Delhiswarava Jagadiswarava*, the lord of Delhi is the lord of the Universe. Such are our traditions of loyalty. And is it possible for us to withhold the tribute of our homage and the tribute of our loyalty to the Queen of England, our august and beloved Sovereign, whose domestic virtues have ennobled the throne itself, the purity of whose character is an example to the womanhood of mankind, whose deep



concern in the welfare of her Indian subjects has awakened in our hearts a sense of attachment for her person and her throne, but who above all stands forth as the representative of a civilization which had its home in the East, which has reached its highest development in the West, and which is destined in the fulness of time to revivify into life the dead bones of our own ancient civilization and thus to establish the surest and the most durable bonds of connection and sympathy between the East and the West, by the ties of a common and renovated civilization. What a glorious work England has done in India ! What a memorable record hers has been in Asiatic history ! Rome accomplished her imperial mission, when under the ægis of her protection, the Christian religion was established throughout the extent of her broad dominions, and the triumph of Christian principles was assured. But to England was reserved a glory, far more memorable than ever fell to the lot of Greek or Roman to achieve. The magnitude of her work is not to be judged of by the magnitude of those works of public utility with which she has covered the country. Roads have been opened ; rivers have been spanned ; railways and telegraphs intersect the land ; time and distance have been abridged ; and the marvels of Western science have been applied to the development of the inexhaustible resources of our country. But these achievements, memorable as they are, pale before the more solid splendour of that intellectual and moral triumph which England has won in the East. What an awakening there has been, intellectual and moral ! What an upheaval of the national mind—what an uplifting of the national soul—what an elevation all

along the line ! What joy, what faith, what hope have been kindled in our hearts ! What visions of glory conjure themselves up before the mind as we contemplate the grand prospect that is opening out before us ! All this is due to English education, to English influences, to the increasing contact between the East and the West. English education has communicated the Promethean spark to the dormant forms of our national life ; it has revolutionised our ideas. Native Indian society is sensibly affected by the impact of Western thought ; and we are on the threshold of a new birth. Two years before the accession of Her Majesty, the Government of India had recognised the duty of the State to encourage high English education. This was done by a Resolution, dated 7th of March 1835, and a few months later, on the 15th of September 1835, the Press was liberated by Sir Charles Metcalfe. Thus then the two great agencies which have so powerfully contributed to create the social forces in the midst of which we live were already in full operation before the accession of Her Majesty ; but it was under the auspices of her glorious reign that they reached their highest development. The Education Department was organized : the grant-in-aid system was introduced ; and last not least the Indian Universities were established. Native Indian journalism started into life under auspices of the Serampur Missionaries ; and aided by the deepening culture of the community the Native Press has developed itself into a mighty power and a potent instrument for the diffusion of knowledge. And lastly we recall to mind with gratitude that the Proclamation of the 1st of November 1858 was issued in the reign of the Queen and bore her sign-manual. We regard the

Proclamation as the great Charter of our rights, and I trust the day is not distant when the principles which it embodies will form the cornerstone of Indian administration. Such are the titles of our Queen to our loyalty, our love and our gratitude. You have already resolved to celebrate the Jubilee by those demonstrations which so powerfully appeal to the popular fancies. Our Queen is the Queen of the people, and it is as well that the demonstrations in honour of the Jubilee should in part be of a popular character. But in our minds, in the minds of this generation and in the imperishable pages of history, the Queen stands forth as the Sovereign under the auspices of whose glorious reign, some of the most memorable achievements of modern civilization have been won. It is therefore only meet and proper that a permanent memorial should commemorate the Jubilee of such a reign. What the form of the memorial is to be, must rest with the Committee. I have no desire to anticipate their decision. But there is something which is nearest to my heart, something which is uppermost in my mind, to which reference has already been made and in support of which I would venture once again to plead. It seems to me that the most fitting memorial of the Jubilee would be the establishment of a Technical College which by reviving our decayed industries would help forward the material advancement of the country and bring bread to the doors of our starving population. Such an institution would be in exact accordance with the spirit of this celebration. The temple of the arts is the temple of peace and plenty, and the reign of our Sovereign has been a reign of unexampled happiness and prosperity to her people. The Institute will extend its blessings to succeeding

generations and will remind them of the good and virtuous Queen who had ruled over them, and the memorials of whose reign were the memorials of beneficence. But whatever may be the ultimate form of the memorial which the Committee may decide upon, of this I am assured that the loyal enthusiasm of a grateful people will make it a success, and that on this auspicious occasion of the Jubilee, there will rise from the hearts of a grateful, contented and prosperous people, the one universal hope and the one universal prayer that long may the Queen be spared to reign over her vast and extensive dominions and to draw closer together the hearts of her people, so that they may realize such as they had never before realized that they are the subjects of the same Sovereign, the participators of the same rights and privileges, linked together by a common destiny, and having a common part to enact in history, and which is best enacted by the cultivation of those mutual charities and by the practice of that high-sounded beneficence, of which the life of the Sovereign affords the best example and the most striking illustration. The unity of the Empire will be most forcibly illustrated on the occasion of the approaching Jubilee. Let it also mean a unity of hearts, feelings and sympathies, the establishment of brotherly harmony and concord between the different races that inhabit this great Empire, and then the Jubilee will have raised its own monument, the most memorable, the most enduring and the most acceptable to the Sovereign herself.

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## AN APPEAL TO THE MOHAMEDAN COMMUNITY.

*[The following speech was delivered by Babu Surendra-nath Banerjea at the great Congress Meeting held at Dacca, on 1st October 1888 :—]*

Mr. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

This is not the first time that I have had the honour of addressing a great assembly of my countrymen at Dacca. Ten years ago I was here, and you honoured me with a large measure of your attention. The kindly welcome with which I have been overwhelmed from all directions and all classes of the community from the moment that I set my foot in East Bengal is but the token of the renewal of your confidence in me and of your generous appreciation of my humble efforts in the service of my country. Next to the approbation of his own conscience the highest reward which a public man may claim and which he may receive is the applause of his own countrymen. This I have in an unstinted measure, so far as the citizens of Dacca are concerned. Encouraged and supported by it, it shall be the aim of my life in the future, as it has been in the past, to prove myself worthy of that confidence which has been bestowed upon me with such generous profusion. Within the last ten years, a great change has taken place. Not the least noticeable feature of the change has been the introduction of Local Self-Government throughout the country. We owe it to the beneficence of perhaps the greatest Viceroy whom the wisdom of English statesmanship had ever sent out to govern the dominions

of the Queen in this part of the world. Local Self-Government has been an unqualified success in all other parts of the country. I hope and trust it will be an unqualified success so far as Dacca is concerned. But it has been with us a matter of constant complaint and of constant regret (pardon me for this reference) that the citizens of Dacca absorbed in their local politics and in the more exciting controversies nearer home have ceased to feel that degree of interest which might have been expected of them in regard to those questions of wider import and deeper significance which concern the welfare of the country at large, that in short the capital of East Bengal has abandoned her legitimate position as the leader of thought and the inspirer of public movements in this part of the country. I hope and trust this meeting is the augury of a better state of things, that the sleeping lion has shaken off its slumbers, and that Dacca means once again to reassert her ancient position as the leader of public opinion in East Bengal. If such be the significance of this meeting, I welcome it with gratitude ; and God knows with what raptures of joy it will be welcomed throughout the length and breadth of the land. For at the present moment, the eyes of all our countrymen are strained with feverish interest and expectancy upon our proceedings here, and your attitude will probably determine the attitude of other towns throughout East Bengal.

I have remarked that we are on the eve of a great change. We are on the threshold of a new epoch. The first streaks of the dawn of a new day are already visible on the firmament. The change is striking. It has even attracted the attention of men in high office

who are less open to the influence of these changes. Sir John Strachey in a work of his has remarked that 'the India of Lord Ripon is no more like the India of Lord Ellenborough than the England of Queen Victoria like the England of Queen Anne.' Sir Auckland Colvin, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, has quoted Biblical language to imply the significance of this change. "The dry bones in the open valley," says he, "have become instinct with life." There is a change deep, profound and significant. The National Congress is the visible outcome, the highest expression, the noblest embodiment of this new-born spirit of change. In the words of the greatest of Indian statesmen it is the soundest triumph of British administration and a crown of glory to the British Government. England has done great things for India. She has given us peace and blessings of a settled Government. She has intersected the country with railways and telegraphs and other works of public utility. She has given us education, a free press, the inestimable right of free discussion, the handmaid of all knowledge and advancement. But all these pale and dwindle into insignificance when compared with the glory of her present achievement—the awakening of national life and the visible tokens of national revival among a people hitherto sunk in the torpor of ages. It is too often said that these Congress-men are seditionists, not surely by Mr. Kemp, the Editor of *The Bengal Times*, who sits opposite to me. But if we are seditionists, we are at any rate in very good company ; for we claim among the friends of the Congress such men as Sir William Hunter, late Member of the Viceregal Council, Sir Richard Garth, late Chief Justice of Bengal, Sir Henry Harrison, Chairman of the

Calcutta Municipality, and last not least Mr. Cotton, Secretary to the Bengal Government. We are not seditionists at all. We are agitators and I am proud to belong to that class. We claim to be the best friends of the Government. A foreign Government such as ours is unaided by representative institutions, cannot possibly know all our wants and grievances, and we tell the Government what our wants are and thus seek to remove all legitimate cause for complaint. We are loyal and we are patriotic. We are loyal because we are patriotic, because we know and we firmly believe that through the British Government and the British Government alone can we hope to obtain those cherished political rights which English education and English influences have taught us to hanker after.

The National Congress is the Congress of the nation. But who constitute the nation? Not surely the Hindus or the Mohamedans alone, but Hindus, Mohamedans, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians—the varied races that inhabit this vast Empire. I claim for the Congress that its programme is the most catholic, the most comprehensive, the most admirably suited to the varied requirements of the different sections of the great Indian community. Its concessions are such as will benefit Hindus and Mohamedans alike. I want to descend from the abstract to the concrete. I am a journalist, and journalists have a knack of taking a common sense view of things. I will quote chapter and verse. The Congress prays for the separation of judicial from executive functions in the administration of criminal justice. If the concession is granted, will not the administration of justice in the country be improved and placed upon a satisfactory footing? And if so, will not the result be beneficial



to Hindus, Mohamedans and all other sections of the community ? The Congress advocates the repeal of the Arms Act, the enlistment of our countrymen as volunteers and the establishment of a Military College in India. Now—I ask—will not these concessions benefit all sections of the community ? And I contend that they will benefit the Mohamedan a great deal more than the Hindu community, for it must be admitted that the Mohamedans represent a noble and a manly community. They still cherish the martial instincts of their sires ; and to them far more than to their Hindu fellow-subjects the concessions to which I have referred will represent an unqualified blessing. But then it is urged that if in accordance with the programme of the Congress, the admission to the higher appointments in the Covenanted Service were to be regulated by competition, the Hindus would get all the appointments and the Mohamedan community would fare very badly. An argument of this kind implies an absence of faith in the future of Islam in India and in the possibilities of its development which I for one am not prepared to share. I deny altogether that under a system of competitive examination the higher appointments in the Civil Service would be monopolized by Hindus and by them alone. It is a matter of unalloyed satisfaction to me, as it must be to the great body of my enlightened Hindu fellow-citizens, to note the rapid advance which the Mohamedan community have made within the last few years in English culture and English education. Not long ago a Mohamedan gentleman stood first at the B.A. Examination of the Calcutta University : another was first in English in the M.A. Examination ; and to a Mohamedan gentleman has been reserved a distinction

which no Hindu has yet been able to achieve in any competitive examination. The worthy son of a worthy sire, Mr. M. Tyabji, the son of the Hon'ble Budruddin Tyabji, stood first at the final examination for the Civil Service of India. With all these facts before me, is it possible to doubt the future of the Mohamedan community in India?—and I must say that it seems to me that those Mohamedan leaders do a distinct disservice to their co-religionists who would discard competition and in violation of the Queen's Proclamation would urge that any section of the community should be advanced to high offices, not by any definite test of merit, but through nomination and the avenues of official favour. Alone in respect of the question of the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils, can there arise any possible difference of opinion. It may be said that if our Legislative Councils were reconstituted upon a partially elective basis the Hindus being in a majority would completely swamp the Mohamedan minority. But here again the Congress, with that solicitude for the interests of all classes of the community which is its most distinguishing feature, provides a remedy. One-half the appointments are to be made by Government, and surely the Government might be trusted to safeguard the interests of the minority. But this doubt, this hesitation can only arise on the assumption of there being a conflict of interests between Hindus and Mohamedans. I deny there is any antagonism whatsoever between the two great races who inhabit this vast continent and who together form the Indian nation. I would appeal to this great gathering of my countrymen and I would appeal to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan himself. He is my authority in this matter. In the expressive language of Sir Syed.

Ahmed Khan, whose present views unhappily are in such direct conflict with the teachings of his lifetime—in the words of this venerable man—India is like a fair maid with two eyes, one representing the Hindu and the other the Mohamedan community. Are we who are her offspring—Hindus and Mohamedans—are we to deny to her the right of perfect vision? Is she to use only one eye when both are available? No, the advancement of India does not mean the advancement of one community to the exclusion of the rest. It means the progressive development of Hindus and Mohamedans alike, bound together by the closest ties of good-will and amity, and having in view the advancement of the interests of their common country. Our relations are not of yesterday's growth. Behind us looms the history of eight hundred years of good-will and amity. The records of the world do not present the instance of a wiser or a more beneficent sovereign or one more devoted to the interests of his people than Akbar. Let me here relate an unwritten chapter of Moghal history. Having firmly established himself on the throne, Akbar sought a matrimonial alliance with a daughter of one of the princely houses of Rajputana. The offer was unique, but coming from the lord of Delhi, the Rajput Princes had no other alternative left than to give it their most serious attention. They at length resolved to accept the offer, but coupled it with conditions which they fully believed would be rejected with scorn. They agreed to enter into this strange alliance with a Mohamedan Sovereign but on the following express conditions:—(1) that the offspring of the marriage should be the heir-apparent and (2) that he should not be circumcised, (Jehangeer, Shah Jehan and Dara Sekoh were not

circumcised) and lastly that the Moghals should give up wearing a particular sort of head-dress to which it appears the Hindus objected. Such were the conditions of the alliance, and to these Akbar unhesitatingly assented, and he thus paved the way for the complete unification of Hindu and Mohamedan interests which was the crowning glory of his rule as it added to the stability of his house. Thus upon the basis of goodness and beneficence rose the majestic fabric of the Moghal Empire which lasted for 800 years, and which but for the fanaticism of Aurangzeb would have lasted for another 800 years. Raja Man Singh carried the Moghal standard to the frontiers of Afghanistan on the North-West, to the wilds of Assam on the East and to the jungles of Orissa on the South. A Hindu by birth he was allowed by his Mohamedan Sovereign to rule over Moslem populations. Another Hindu, Raja Todur Mall, consolidated the Empire on a financial basis, while Beer Ball remained to the last moment of his life the favourite companion of his Sovereign. The policy of Akbar became the policy of the Moghal Empire and the policy of its Mohamedan subjects. The Mohamedans loved and trusted the Hindus and the Hindus reciprocated their kindness with enthusiastic gratitude. The Moghal Empire has crumbled into atoms. Moslem glory has for ever departed from India. But the cordiality between Hindus and Mohamedans has survived the wreck of an Empire and the downfall of a great and princely house. It has been truly said that the nation dwells in the villages and in the interior—away from the great towns and the busy centres of trade and commerce. If that be so, I would ask you to mark the relations which exist between Hindus and Mohamedans.

in the villages of Bengal. The most endearing terms of domestic relationship are freely interchanged. Brother, cousin, uncle, are the words which Hindus apply to Mohamedans, and Mohamedans to Hindus. Yet we are told in spite of these facts, in spite of the clearest evidence to the contrary, that the relations between the two communities are far from being satisfactory, and that there is a growing sense of estrangement between them. No such thing. We are brothers united by the closest ties which can bind man to man, and let no man seek to sever bonds which nature has fastened with her own hands.

I must say, however, that I cannot understand an argument which is sometimes brought forward in justification of the attitude of a section of the Mohamedan community in regard to the National Congress. A Nawab of Hyderabad in a conversation which he recently had with Mr. Gladstone gave him to understand that the Mohamedan community had abstained from joining the Congress, because they were unwilling to embarrass the Government. Embarrass the Government by our puny representations ! Embarrass this mighty Government which has built up and which so admirably sustains this great fabric of Empire by any representation of grievances which you or I may make ! Why I must say that I have a far higher opinion of the strength and the greatness of the British Government in India than to think that we should embarrass it by our representations. So far from doing so, it seems to me that we actually help the Government when we have any petitions to present or any representations to make. But mark the inconsistency of the attitude assumed by the Nawab. What do our public bodies

do—the *Anjuman* of this city of which your Chairman is the worthy President and the various *Anjumans* scattered all over the country ? Why they seem to be a source of endless embarrassment to the Government, for they are constantly addressing the Government with petitions. If the views of the Nawab are to be accepted, every *Anjuman* in the country should close its doors and give up its appointed work. But perhaps what the Nawab means is that he has no objection to representations coming from particular bodies or associations, but a united expression of opinion such as what the Congress secures is likely to embarrass the Government. A single dose, the Nawab does not mind ; but he objects to the dose being repeated. Common sense and reason rise in revolt against an argument of this description. What is the object of any representation that you may desire to submit to the Government ? Surely to obtain some concession or some reform. Is not the concession likely to be forthcoming when many voices pray for it instead of one ? These are considerations so obvious that it seems to me a marvel that there should be any doubt with regard to them. But mark the answer that Mr. Gladstone gave. That prince of politicians, the far-seeing statesman, long the Prime Minister of England, quietly heard the Nawab and said that all legitimate and reasonable efforts of the people to represent their requirements to Government commanded his warmest sympathy. Therefore we have this fact that Mr. Gladstone himself approves of constitutional agitation. And the Congress aims at nothing more. I would once again earnestly plead for the sympathy of all sections of the Mohamedan community on behalf of the Congress. The Congress

flings its portals wide open for the admission of all—it welcomes all. The Mohamedan community have absolutely nothing to be afraid of from a Hindu majority. Every possible precaution has been taken to safeguard the interests of the minority. A rule has been introduced at the instance, I believe, of Mr. Budruddin Tyabji which provides that if the Mohamedan Delegates unanimously or nearly unanimously object to any question, it shall not be taken up for discussion by the Congress. The voice of the minority will thus rule the majority in respect of the choice of any question for purposes of deliberation, when the minority have a pretty strong feeling on the subject. I must say that it appears to me to be extremely unreasonable on the part of any section of the community to object to the programme of the Congress and to find fault with it, when they deliberately stand aloof from it. The Congress is open to all ; and if it goes wrong surely the only way of preventing it is by joining the Congress and not by criticising it from outside or by assuming a hostile position in regard to it. In this connection I must observe that I deplore the language that has been employed by an important member of the Native Press in regard to the Mohamedan community of Bengal. I would give words to recall that language. It is as mischievous as it is wide of the truth, and I am perfectly certain that it does not represent in the remotest degree the sentiments of the Hindu community towards their Mohamedan fellow-countrymen. But let us not quarrel over mere words. Let bye-gones be bye-gones. I would ask you to forget and to forgive. Hindus and Mohamedans ! we are brothers; and as brothers sometimes quarrel, so too they always make up their quarrels in the presence of the

larger interests of the family. I ask of you, Hindus and Mohamedans, to forget your jealousies and your petty differences in the name of your common country and for the promotion of her dearest interests.

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## GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPALITIES.

[*Speech at the Municipal Meeting in 1896 in connection with H. H. The Lieutenant-Governor's Speech at Entally.*]

Sir,—I have the honour to move the first Resolution. The terms of the Resolution are as follows :—(*Here reads the Resolution.*) In moving this Resolution, I desire to guard myself against a misconception which the circumstances of the case may give rise to. The wisdom of holding this meeting has been doubted in some quarters, and our attitude has been misconstrued. I desire to say on my own behalf and I may add on behalf of those who have signed the requisition, that our attitude is not one of defiance but of defence—it is an attitude of explanation and of vindication. We are all here animated by a common sentiment of dutiful allegiance to the honoured Head of the Government of these Provinces—by the belief—in my case I will add, the assured conviction that when we have stated our case as it ought to be stated, and have laid before His Honour the facts and arguments as they ought to be laid, and when upon the basis of those facts we appeal to him for justice and fair play, then we are sure His Honour with an Englishman's instinct will accord to us a sympathetic response. In that hope and confidence we have convened this meeting. In that hope and confidence we desire to approach His Honour with the appeal that His Honour will be pleased to reconsider his judgment, at least, so much of it as involves a censure of the Municipality. Our case is so strong—it is so overwhelmingly convincing—that we have only to state it to carry home

conviction, to every unprejudiced mind and to dissipate the misconceptions which have gathered round His Honour's speech. We fully recognize our position in relation to the Government. It is a position of subordination strictly safeguarded under limitations imposed by the law. In one sense we are the arm of administration. An important branch of public affairs has been entrusted to our care. But at the same time we cannot forget that we are also the representatives of the people. We are here, because our constituents have sent us here. They can make and unmake us. Their confidence is to us the breath of our nostrils. Their approbation, next to the approbation of our own consciences, is the highest reward we can aspire to. But when our administration has been arraigned in the way it has been arraigned by the Head of the Local Government, then we incur the imminent risk of losing the confidence of our constituents unless we are able to vindicate our administration and justify it in their eyes. Duty to them and ourselves—duty to the public and the Government alike—renders it necessary that we should enter upon a formal and public defence of our administration. Such, however, is our faith in the justice of our case that we feel that we may rely with absolute confidence upon the approving judgment of public opinion. The Resolution says that we have been condemned by His Honour—condemned unheard—condemned under circumstances which make the condemnation unmerited and inappropriate to the occasion. Have we been condemned or not? I heard Mr. Farr say that he was not aware that we had been condemned by the Lieutenant-Governor. I am sorry that Mr. Farr and his friends have left the meeting

before they had heard all that we had to say. If we have not been condemned, such a meeting as this would be utterly out of place, and I should be offering an insult, a deliberate affront to your understanding, were I to ask you to accept the Resolution which I have the honour to move. Sir, as I listened to the speech of His Honour when it was delivered, as I read it in the newspapers in print, it seemed to me, as it must have seemed to all of you, that it involved a scathing unqualified condemnation of the Commissioners. Since then, however, an explanation has been offered. The Hon'ble Mr. Risley, writing on behalf of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in a communication addressed to the Medical Board, has explained that His Honour has a perfectly open mind on the question of responsibility and that it is a mistake to suppose that he intended that the executive were blameless in the matter of the sanitary shortcomings of Calcutta, and that the Commissioners alone were to blame. For my part, I am not prepared to accept the inference which underlies these remarks ; and you are not prepared to accept the distinction which is sought to be made here between the Commissioners and their Executive. The Commissioners and the Executive form integral parts, inseparable elements of the Corporation. To condemn the Executive is to condemn the Commissioners. To condemn the Executive is to say that the Commissioners have been remiss in their supervision of their work. Nay more, we are not prepared to permit an extraneous authority—however exalted that authority might be—to interpose between ourselves and our employees and apportion the measure of responsibility between us. Nothing could be more demoralizing to the Executive,

more utterly subversive of official discipline. It has never been a part of the traditions of the Corporation to regard the Executive as separate from the Commissioners in the matter of responsibility. In the dark days of the Corporation when a Commission was appointed, the Executive under the guidance of Sir Henry Harrison cordially co-operated with the Commissioners in defending the menaced interests of the Corporation. I hope we are not going to depart from those traditions. I hope those traditions have not become matters of ancient history. I hope, Sir, you as the Head of the Executive will by your vote to-day once again affirm the principle that your honour or dishonour means our honour or dishonour.

Thus, then, notwithstanding the explanation which has been offered, we are driven to the conclusion that we have been condemned. The Resolution says that the condemnation passed upon the Commissioners was unmerited and inappropriate to the occasion and that it was passed without affording them the opportunity of explanation or defence. The Lieutenant-Governor was the guest of the Commissioners. The Commissioners were his hosts. He was their honoured guest. For the guest to turn round upon his hosts and to censure them is a proceeding which will not recommend itself to the approval of right-thinking men. Then again what was the occasion which had brought the Lieutenant-Governor to Entally? He had come to open the new drainage works—to preside at a function which associated with the inauguration of the most important sanitary work of the generation. It will occur to most people that such an occasion was singularly inopportune for censuring the Commissioners for their alleged

neglect of the sanitation of Calcutta. The function itself was the most striking refutation of the charge. Even the *Pioneer* newspaper, the accredited organ of the official hierarchy, condemned the speech as being unsuitable to the occasion on which it was delivered. But we further complain that we have been condemned unheard. The Lieutenant-Governor based his remarks upon the Report of the Sanitary Inspectors; but the Report was never sent to the Commissioners for explanation. It is an eternal principle of justice that no man shall be condemned unheard. Is the Corporation alone to be singled out for exceptional treatment? The veriest murderer caught red-handed in the act, reeking with the blood of his innocent victim, is allowed, such is the humanity of the law, the opportunity of explanation and defence. But this great Corporation, the greatest representative body in India, with a record which would bear favourable comparison with the record of any similar body in any other part of the world, is denied this privilege. And by whom? The Head of the Local Government. And who is the Head of the Local Government? The distinguished administrator who was late Secretary to Lord Ripon's Government—a Government that placed the system of Local Self-Government in India upon a firm and durable basis and covered itself with ever-lasting honour and glory. I am constrained to say—I say it with all reluctance—but I must say it—in the words of the greatest of English poets that we are fallen upon evil times and upon evil tongues, and by darkness and danger compassed round. But, Sir, we also complain that His Honour's speech was based upon a grave misapprehension of the facts of the case. The third Resolution in charge of my friend

deals with the mistakes of fact bearing upon the conservancy of the town. I will not trespass into my friend's province. But there are mistakes of fact not covered by the third Resolution, and to some of these I desire to call your attention. We have been set down as a set of talkers wasting our time in talk. The charge of loquacity has been laid to our doors. With reference to this charge, I will say this that speech is governing the politics of the civilized world. I hope and trust that within a measurable distance of time it will govern the politics of the Indian Continent. Government by speech is the order of the day. Not even the omnipotence of autocracy will avail to arrest or postpone the slow, the steady, the triumphant development of these forces, working noiselessly in the bosom of society, which are hastening forward the accomplishment of this great end. However that may be, is it true that we make speeches for the sake of speech-making—that we talk more than we should? Is it the case that we are “an armoury of talk,” to use the words of a late distinguished Secretary to the Government of Bengal? Those who are most familiar with the working of the Corporation are the best judges in this matter. In this case the saying is not true that the spectators see more of the game than the actual players. The spectators must see less for they have to rely upon hearsay evidence. In modern Indian history, there is no name more honoured than that of Kristo Das Pal, there never was a member of this body who rendered greater services to the Corporation and the town, or whose utterances are entitled to more weight. Speaking in 1881 of the elected municipality, then in its early years, he observed :—

‘An examination of the Municipal debates in the past and

present will, we doubt not, satisfy the most fastidious person that there is less talk now than before. It is superfluous for us to say that public question cannot be decided without talk, long or small, and that the character of the talk in public bodies is to a great extent regulated by the information possessed and the earnestness of convictions entertained by different speakers. Life itself is a long talk. If the world consisted only of mutes, then society would hardly exist. In all the walking moments of life man spends much of his time in talk, whether for business, instruction or pleasure. Public life in the civilized world means a war of words.

But Kristo Das Pal was himself a greater talker. The most accomplished debater of his time, he might be presumed to be partial to speech-making. Further he laboured under serious disability that he was not an official, and to some minds, present company of course always excepted, official testimony has the force and validity of gospel truth. Therefore let me pass from unofficial to official testimony, and the testimony, which I am about to quote will be that of perhaps the most distinguished civilian who has ever held the office of Chairman. Thus spoke Sir Henry Harrison in 1887 :—

When large questions of principle came up for final discussion in general meeting, it could not but be expected that the men of leisure, who naturally took an interest in the work which they had helped to complete, would also naturally be prepared to discuss at length the questions which were under consideration; but the men of business would not like to sit for two or three hours to discuss them. It was unreasonable to suppose that this could be otherwise, and when European gentleman did take an interest in such matters, they themselves fell into the habit of making as long speeches as native gentlemen. Some of the longest speeches he had ever listened to were made by European gentlemen in debates in which they were taking a great interest.

But 1896 is not 1887, and that may make a difference.

Let me therefore come to more recent times and quote a more modern authority. Let me quote the words of the late-lamented Mr. Lee whose early death was such a heavy loss to the Corporation and the town :—

Less frequently now than of old, because the outside public is better acquainted with the facts, but still occasionally, we hear insinuations that much time is wasted in this hall by long speeches from the Municipal Commissioners. No charge could be further from the mark. In all my experience—and that has covered full three years—I have seldom listened to a speech that has not been useful and to the point. I can hardly recall a single instance in which I have made reflection that the speaker was throwing no new light on his subject, and was simply speaking to make a speech. The facts, indeed, are conclusive. In the course of the year you hold some thirty general meetings. All the proceedings of every committee meeting, of which some 250 are held in the course of the year, come before you in this hall for review. A single Committee will frequently deal with 20 or more separate matters, and you have on the average to review proceedings of such Committees at each single meeting in this hall, so that you dispose of sometimes 120, seldom less than forty items of business at a sitting. How long do you take over it? As a rule between one and two hours! Who could say with fairness that that is excessive? How many similar deliberative bodies in the world are there that would dispose of the work in less time? The general rule that we endeavour to observe is not to speak without special knowledge and clear opinion, and then to express our thoughts in language as brief as we can make it.

These words possess a pathetic interest for us; for they were the last words addressed by Mr. Lee to this Corporation—they form part of his valedictory address delivered on the 23rd March 1893.

From opinions let us pass on to the consideration of the facts of the case; and in this connection, I desire to congratulate my friend, Babu Nolin Behary Sircar, upon the admirable statement which he has drawn up, travers-



ing the various points raised in His Honor's speech. We find from the table in Babu Nolin Behary Sircar's statement, that in 1894-95 there were 239 items of business brought up before the Commissioners. Out of them 191 items were disposed of without discussion. There were 38 items in which short speeches were made, and there were only 10 items which gave rise to long debates. In 1895-96, there were 328 items of business, which were brought before the Commissioners, and so many as 249 items of business disposed of without any discussion. Further we find that in 1894-95 the attendance of Commissioners at a meeting was forty on an average, of whom only six spoke, 34 giving "silent, sensible votes." In 1895-96, the average attendance of Commissioners at each meeting was 41, of whom only 7 spoke on an average, 34 giving "silent, sensible votes."

This charge has again and again been brought and as often refuted. Falsehood dies hard. It is a hydra-headed monster, which rears its head as often as you slay it. You have slain the monster this time. You may not be too sure that you will not have to repeat the operation. Then, Sir, our constitution has been assailed. For our constitution we are not responsible. We do the best with it. It has been observed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie that the municipal constitution of Calcutta is derived *en bloc* from the most advanced models in England, and that it has been determined without reference to the totally different circumstances of an Oriental city and a mixed community. The statement involves a serious misapprehension of facts. Point out to me the Town Council or Municipality in England the members of which are partly elected and partly nominated. Point out to me the Town Council or Municipality

in England the Mayor of which is nominated by the Government. Point out to me the Town Council or Municipality in England which is subjected to the same measure of control to which we are subjected at the hands of the Executive Government. Then again it is not the case that the varied and diversified interests of an Oriental city and of a mixed community were not sufficiently borne in mind in framing the constitution. Read the debates which took place in Council in 1876 when the constitution was framed, and again in 1888 when it came on for review (I will not tire your patience by quoting extracts) and you will find that the illustrious men who framed the constitution and those who remodelled it, men like Sir Stuart Hogg and Sir Henry Harrison, paid special attention to the representation of the varied interests of our community, and took the necessary precautions to secure that end. But after all is our constitution so bad? It has been pronounced to be a success by distinguished men of the eminence of the late Mr. Colman Macaulay and others. A tree is judged by its fruits. Look at the achievements of the elected Municipality. The solvency of the Municipality secured upon a firm and durable basis, the increased and increasing credit of the Corporation until that credit is as good as that of the Government of India, the magnificent works of sanitation which have changed the face of Calcutta until it has become a sanitarium for all Bengal—these are the enduring memorials of the wisdom, the judgment, the sagacity and public spirit of the much-maligned elected Commissioners of Calcutta. I should like to know what department under the direct control of the Government could show such satisfactory results. You complain of the over-crowding of Calcutta. To what is it due? May

I ask ? People from the moffusil flock to Calcutta as to a sanitarium from their malaria-stricken homes. Within the last twenty years the price of land in Calcutta has been trebled. Has the volume of your trade increased threefold ? No. What then is the explanation ? The demand for land has steadily increased owing to the increasing healthiness of Calcutta. Why the elected Commissioners during the time they have been in office have spent nearly two crores and fifty lakhs of rupees upon works of permanent utility ; the Justices spent only a crore and eighty lakhs during the time they administered the affairs of Calcutta.

It is too late in the day to criticize the constitution. It has stood the stress of twenty long years. It has been pronounced to be a success by high authority. It has produced the magnificent results to which I have referred. It has secured the financial solvency of the Corporation and has improved its credit. Time destroys all shams and impositions. If ours was a bastard constitution unsuited to the exigencies of the situation, it would have long ago gone the way of all things. I am obliged to say that never was there a grosser misconception than what pervades this part of the speech of His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.

Then, Sir, it has been observed that our executive is weak and can be easily upset. The suggestion is that we interfere unnecessarily with the executive. Sir, I appeal to you as the Head of the executive—I would like to appeal to Mr. Hughes as the head of the spending department of the Corporation—whether you have found any difficulty in getting on with the Commissioners—I should like to know whether any Chairman, any Health Officer, save and except Dr. Simpson, has ever

experienced any difficulty in this respect. If Dr. Simpson had all his own way, I very much fear Calcutta would have been declared a plague-stricken city, quarantine regulations would have been enforced, the trade of Calcutta ruined, and the Municipality reduced to bankruptcy.

One word more, before I conclude. His Honour has been pleased to observe that as regards many of us our individual stake in the town is small, that we represent ourselves in the first instance, and a mass of heterogeneous interests in the second. We cannot very well help representing ourselves. That we represent ourselves and that we represent a mass of heterogeneous interests (by which I understand the interests of our constituents, who are Hindus and Mohamedans) may be our misfortune, but is certainly not our fault. But I deny altogether that we have little or no stake in the town. I will venture to say that we have much greater stake than the birds of passage who come here to shake the pagoda tree and run away with our gold. We have a small stake in the town ! Why the dust of our homesteads is consecrated by the ashes of our sires. Calcutta is the home of our ancestors—it is the home of our wives, our mothers and our daughters—it is the destined home of our children and our children's children. If ever the plague were to break out here—may God avert such a calamity—where would the birds of passage be ? We shall, however, continue to cling to the habitations of our ancestors with fond and devoted affection. Nothing in history, nothing in fable exceeds, the love and devotion which the Hindu feels for his homestead. It is the centre of all his joys—round it gather the noblest and the tenderest of his domestic associa-

tions. They cannot indeed be transformed into gold—what gold can measure them ! But are sentimental considerations of no weight in the concerns of life—are they to count as a feather in the balance in dealing with a people who are largely governed by sentiment ? I will not detain you any longer. I trust our vote to-day will be an unanimous vote. This Corporation recognizes no distinction of race—no difference between official and non-officials, between the Commissioners and the executive. Here we are all members of a common body, animated by a common sentiment and a common desire to maintain untarnished the honour, the reputation and the dignity of this great Corporation which it is our privilege to serve. We remember with pride that when the Corporation was assailed by popular clamour and placed on its trial, Europeans and Indians; the Executive and the Commissioners stood shoulder to shoulder, firmly knitted together as one body, resolved to defend the menaced interests of the Corporation. Are we now going to prove false to our traditions ? No mistake; we are in the midst of a grave crisis, as grave as any one which has ever occurred in the history of the Corporation ; for only the other day—I think it was on Saturday last,—His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor observed from his place in Council that a considerable amendment of the Calcutta Municipal Act might be expected. I do not take it in the light of a threat, but as the serious pronouncement of a deliberate opinion on the part of a responsible statesman. However that may be, I will say this on my own behalf, and I will venture to add on your behalf, that so long as we are members of this Corporation, so long as we are entrusted with the municipal administration of this city, so long as the safe-

guarding of the constitution under which we work is in our hands, as long we shall manfully endeavour to perform our duties, undaunted by the frowns and unseduced by the smiles of power. In order that we may thus perform our duties, and in a manner that will redound to our own credit and to the benefit of the Corporation, the most perfect accord, the most cordial unanimity should subsist between us. In this as in other matters, united we stand, divided we fall.

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## SWADESHISM.

[*The following speech on "Swadeshim" was delivered in December, 1906.*]

GENTLEMEN,—

Notwithstanding the encomium which has been bestowed upon me by my friend who sits to my left (*Mr. Tilak*) who has just told you that I possess a motor voice—(*laughter*)—I almost despair—notwithstanding this gift—of making myself heard by this vast gathering. Nothing was more gratifying to me than the shouts of "Bande Mataram" (*loud cries of "Bande Mataram"*) with which you welcomed me on my arrival here. It is our national cry (*hear, hear*), (*loud cries of "Bande Mataram"*)—not our battle cry (*laughter*) but the cry of peace, good-will and harmony among the different Indian races. (*Hear, hear*). It is not a militant appeal to the Goddess Kali to lead us to victory against the English (*laughter*)—but a soft, generous and fervent patriotic effusion reminding us of our great duty to our Motherland. (*Hear, hear*).

Gentlemen, this meeting has been convened under the auspices of the "Swadeshi Bastu Pracharini Sabha" which flourished under the distinguished auspices of my patriotic friend who sits to my right (*Dr. Deshmukh*). So great has been the stimulus which the preachings of this Sabha have imparted to the Swadeshi cause that I understand it is under contemplation to open an "Indian Store" with a capital of three lakhs of rupees, and it is proposed that India's Grand Old Man, Mr. Naoroji—(*loud applause*), should be accorded the honour

of opening the Store when he comes here to preside (*hear, hear*) 'over the deliberation of the Congress. I further understand from the brief conversation I have had with my friend when I was coming here that it is the young men who form the pillars and the support of the "Swadeshi Bastu Pracharini Sabha." So it must always be. In the early years of the dawn the voices of children heard the loudest ; so in the dawn of nation's birth, the voices of young are heard high above the jarring notes of strife and discord. (*Hear, hear*). In Bengal it is the young who have held aloft the banner of the Swadeshi Movement. (*Hear, hear*). It is the young men who were in the forefront and who have been our martyrs in the Swadeshi cause. (*Hear, hear*). Let me here repeat an incident which went straight to my heart. Three months ago as I was sitting in the *Bengalce* office, attending to my duties, there came a lad as high as that (*pointing with his hand to the height of the boy by holding him at a certain distance from the ground*). He was about 16 or 17 years old ; I said : "Who are you"?—for I have always had the tenderest feelings for our boys. (*Hear, hear*). I asked him : "Who are you, what brings you here ; what is your work ; how may I help you in that work" ? I am Rajendralal Shaha." (*Tremendous applause*). Rajendralal Shaha was a name that was familiar to me, it was the name of a young martyr. (*Hear, hear*). I asked him what had brought him to Calcutta. He said that his appeal case had been heard at the High Court, that the case had been decided against him, and that he was going back to jail to serve out his time.

He said that with more calmness and freedom from fervour than what I am displaying at this moment.



(*Hear, hear*). I said : "Are you sorry?" He said "No, I rejoice that it has been permitted to me to serve my country." (*Hear, hear and loud cries of Bande Mataram*). That was the man who was cordially received by the inhabitants of Mymensingh the other day when they turned out in their hundreds near the precincts of the jail. But they were beaten and belaboured by a cowardly Police. (*Loud cries of "Shame"*). I say "cowardly" deliberately with the full sense of my responsibility—"cowardly" in the sense that the police knew perfectly well that the mandate of the leaders was that they were to suffer in silence and never, under any circumstances, to commit any breaches of the Law. (*Hear, hear*). The police knew perfectly well that the boys would not return blow for blow. It was relying upon this sense of security that they attacked these young men. Don't you call that "cowardly" when you attack a man in the full consciousness that he will not return blow for blow? Well, then young men as you are, be ready to serve your motherland in this great movement and support it with all the fervour and enthusiasm that you are capable of. Don't for one moment accept the principle which is sought to be enforced in these days that students ought to have no concern whatever with Swadeshism. (*Shame*). Dismiss it as a delusion and as a myth which is manufactured to mislead you. There is no nobler school of apprenticeship for the young than the school of Swadeshism. (*Hear, hear*). Therefore gather round this movement in your hundreds, in your thousands, and in your tens of thousands. Above all, strive to prove your Mahratta courage, pluck, heroism and self-sacrifice. Nay more, carry with you in this onward progressive march other communities now linked together with you

by an inseparable destiny. Let Gujratis, Mahomedans, Mahrattas, Bhatias,—all sections of the community, no matter what your political differences may be—gather together under the all-embracing banner of Swadeshism. (*Hear, hear*).

I wish to address a word of appeal, perhaps a word of remonstrance to the piece-goods merchants of Bombay. (*Laughter*). Bombay has a great destiny before her in connection with the Swadeshi Movement. (*Hear, hear*). The inspiration may have come from Bengal, but the consummation and the accomplishment of the movement lies with you, the people of Bombay. (*Hear, hear*). You can make or mar the fortunes of this movement. You have your great Mills here—in Bombay, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, Ahmedabad and other places too numerous to be mentioned. (*Cheers*). You are manufacturers of large quantities of piece-goods which you place on the market. My earnest advice to you is—and will you excuse the impertinence of a layman in giving advice to the mercantile community—(*laughter*)—my earnest advice to you is to capture the markets of India by moderating your prices. I may tell you a case which occurs to me at the present moment. Many years ago we had the Tudor Ice Company in Calcutta. They were monopolists. Another Company was started. Then what did the Tudor Company do? It immediately lowered its prices and kept them at a low figure until the financial resources of the rival Company were exhausted, and then it had again the ancient monopoly. (*Laughter*).

I ask you not exactly to imitate their conduct but to recognise the principle that underlies it. In connection with the Swadeshi Movement the economic aspect of the question can never be overlooked. Cheapness

must in the long run assert itself. If there is any disparity in respect of prices between your piece-goods and the piece-goods of foreign countries and if that disparity is to your prejudice, then the effect of it would be to scare away purchasers, and you to that extent interfere with the expansion of the Swadeshi Movement. It was made a matter of complaint the year before last, during the Pujas of 1905, that the Bombay mill-owners had enormously raised their prices, and when I wrote back here to make enquiries I found that the statement was true. I think it was a great pity—I won't use a harsher word—unpatriotic was the word which had come to my lips—(*Hear, hear and laughter*)—that they should have raised their prices amid the exigencies of a national crisis. That is the first word of advice that I have to address to the merchants of Bombay. In the next place, I would ask you to expand the sphere of the Swadeshi Movement and open Swadeshi Stores in various parts of the country. I understand that there are places where there is only one Swadeshi shop as against half-a-dozen videshi shops. (*Laughter and cries of Shame*). Why should the number not be transposed? (*Hear, hear.*) Have half-a-dozen Swadeshi shops as against one videshi shop. (*Hear, hear.*) In our part of the country there are Marwary merchants. (*Laughter*). I have great respect for them. (*Hear, hear.*) Do you know how we tackle them? We approach them in the spirit of compromise. Compromise is the law of the universe. Nature makes her compromises and why should not man do likewise? We tell the Marwaries: "You have got half-a-dozen bideshi shops; will you kindly reduce them by one-half? Let there be three bideshi shops and three."

Swadeshi shops. We shall see that your Swadeshi shops prosper and flourish, and the local leaders help you." (*Hear, hear*). The Swadeshi tide has set in; it is irresistible; it is not in the power of any one to set it back. No, that is impossible. Let our merchants flow with the tide and it is then alone that they will retain that position of affluence and influence which they possess at present. (*Hear, hear*). That is my earnest advice to them.

I have heard our movement described "the so-called Swadeshi movement." I have heard it thus described by high officials—one of the highest—not Lord Minto (*laughter*)—for His Excellency I have the highest possible respect. I have heard the Swadeshi movement described as "the so-called Swadeshi movement" by high officials and by the representatives of the Anglo-Indian press. (*Cries of Shame*). I have no quarrel with them. Personally I have none. On public grounds I may have. (*Hear, hear and laughter*). But when they commit mistakes we are bound to point out their errors. I confess I don't quite understand what is meant by the expression "the so-called Swadeshi movement." But I may make guess. What perhaps is implied is that ours is really a political movement masked under an economic guise. (*Laughter*). If I am right in this interpretation I will say this that the description is both inadequate and misleading. Swadeshim is, or more properly speaking, was, until its more recent developments a purely economic movement which, in the particular circumstances of our province, received an impetus from political considerations. Swadeshim came into being long before even Lord Curzon assumed the reins of office. (*Hear, hear*). Its existence was ignored amid the tumultuous distrac-

tions of our political controversies. While other and more ephemeral movements monopolised public attention, the infant Hercules was growing in strength and stature, laying for itself a rich reserve fund of energy which was to qualify it for its marvellous achievements in the future. (*Applause*). The infant Hercules has now grown into years of adolescence and his labours have just begun. (*Hear hear*). I have heard the Swadeshi movement described as being in the domain of economics what the Congress is in the domain of politics. I venture to think it is a good deal more than that. (*Laughter*). It is not merely an economic or a social or a political movement, but it is an all-comprehensive movement—(*hear, hear*)—co-extensive with the entire circle of our national life, and in which are centred the many-sided activities of our growing community. (*Hear, hear*).

It seems to me as if some beneficent spirit had whispered into the ears of the genius of our motherland this *shibboleth* of our unity and industrial and political salvation. It is the rallying cry of all India, of her multitudinous races and peoples. It appeals to all—high and low, rich and poor. It is understood by all. The Deccan peasant or the Bengalee rustic may find some difficulty in understanding the merits of a system of representative Government. The subtleties of the question involved in the separation of judicial from executive functions, may elude the grasp of his untrained mind. But when you tell him that the wealth of the country that it is to his advantage that it should be so kept and that for this purpose he must purchase country-made articles in preference to foreign articles, he opens wide his eyes and ears and drinks in the lesson. A glow of intelligence

illuminates his features ; hope for the moment chases away the settled melancholy of his countenance, and he recognises that herein lies the solution of what to him is the problem of problems, the removal of the poverty of himself and of his class. He stands by you and salutes you as his deliverer. (*Hear, hear*).

Gentlemen, fifteen months ago my late lamented friend, Mr. A. M. Bose—(*hear, hear*) whose memory you respect and whose name I revere and adore, had a conversation in connection with the partition question with a high official of the Government. That official said to my friend : " Mr. Bose, if the masses were to interest themselves in public affairs, the Government of this country would have to be conducted upon totally different principles." We are resolved to bring the masses and the classes together (*hear, hear*) and to associate them with us in our political agitations. We are resolved to liberalise this great Government and broaden it upon the foundations of the willing loyalty and the devoted allegiance of the people. (*Hear, hear*). That represents the goal of our aspirations. I desire the Anglo-Indian community to note the fact that the tide of union between the classes and the masses which has set in with such force is a decree from the hands of Almighty Providence. (*Hear, hear*). None can resist it. The Congress has brought the educated community throughout the country upon the same platform: Swadeshism will bring the classes and the masses upon the same platform. (*Hear, hear*). Swadeshism is of Divine origin. (*Cheers*). The Swadeshi leaders are humble instruments in the hands of Divine Providence walking under the illumination of His Holy spirit. (*Hear, hear*). Call it superstition, call it fanaticism, reckon us as being

among the deluded maniacs of mankind, but you have read the lesson of History in vain if you do not recognise the fact that men working under such a conviction and fortified by such a belief will dare all and do all. (*Hear, hear*). That is the spirit which animates us. (*Cheers*). Being of Divine origin, Swadeshism is based upon the love of country and not the hatred of the foreigner. (*Hear, hear*). I know the statement will at once be challenged. (*Laughter*). It will be said Swadeshism has accentuated the acerbities of racial antagonism. If it has done so, we are guiltless. (*Hear, hear*). We are in no way responsible for it. (*Hear, hear*). We have been the persecuted rather than the persecutors. We have suffered, but we have not retaliated. I fail to see wherein the element of racial hatred comes in at all. If you don't choose to purchase an article manufactured by me, does it follow that you hate me ! (*A voice, 'No'*). With similar consistency you may say that because you don't choose to eat food cooked by me, therefore you hate me. (*Hear, hear and laughter*). Absolutely no sort of racial antagonism or strife is involved in Swadeshism. (*Hear, hear*). Further in the domain of the emotions, the possession of particular quality involves the negation of its opposite. Love of justice involves the hatred of injustice. Love of truth involves the hatred of falsehood. Love of the goods of one's own country necessarily involves a dislike—I will not say hatred—of the goods of a foreign country. (*Hear, hear*). If there is an element of dislike, are we responsible for it ? (*Laughter*). It is inherent in the very nature of things. Your appeal must be to the Great Creator of this Universe against the necessary and natural order of things. Therefore once again I say that Swadeshism

is based upon the love of country. (*Hear, hear*). Our object is to popularise the use of indigenous articles, to foster the growth and development of indigenous arts and industries and to safeguard the country against the growing evils of impoverishment. (*Cheers*).

Ours is one of the poorest countries in the world—so poor that there is none to do her obeisance. She is no longer the country which once excited the cupidity of foreign conquerors—a country whose pristine splendour brought down upon her fertile plains the marauding hordes from the arid steppes of Central Asia. Her days of prosperity are gone—I hope not for ever. (*Hear, hear*). Our poverty is accentuated by the drains—the official drain and the commercial drain. The official drain consists of the Home Charges. I may say that until there is a further expansion of the Legislative Councils and we have a potent voice over the public expenditure, the official drain will continue unchecked and undiminished. The commercial drain is a factor which we can grapple with at once. (*Hear, hear*). We spend about 50 crores of Rupees every year in purchasing foreign articles. In Bengal, gentlemen, we spend about 16 crores every year upon the purchase of foreign-manufactured piece-goods. Our population is 8 crores ; therefore, independently of the taxes which we pay to the British Government we pay a poll-tax of Rs. 2 per head. (*Laughter*). We are resolved to put an end to this poll-tax. (*Hear, hear*). And I ask you to help us to do so. (*Hear, hear*).

Gentlemen, I feel I have already exhausted your patience. (*Cries, from all sides, of "No, no, go on"*). If I have not exhausted your patience—(*laughter*)—at any rate, I am approaching the time when the cock crows—



—(laughter)—and it will be necessary for me to bid you farewell. (Laughter).

Swadeshism, as I have observed, is an all-comprehensive movement. In Bengal it has revolutionised our ideals and conceptions. The air is surcharged with the industrial spirit. The craze for service has received a check. The spirit of self-reliance is abroad. We are making an earnest and organised effort to place education, general and technical, under national control and conduct it in accordance with national ideals and aspirations. All this represents the trend of things in Bengal. The Bengal of to-day—Bengal after the partition is a very different place from Bengal before the partition. (Hear, hear). As I have referred to the partition I may perhaps for a moment be permitted to allude to that which fills the heart of every patriotic Bengalee. Mr. Morley has told us that the partition is 'a settled fact.' (Laughter). We decline to accept what is a wrong, a grievous wrong, an outrage upon public sentiment as among the varieties of life and administration. The wrong must be undone. All nature cries out against it. The order of the universe is arrayed against it. It is a lie and we must all combine to undo it. You are assembled here in your thousands. My earnest appeal to you all is to sympathise and to co-operate with us in undoing that which is the most grievous injury that we have suffered in the whole course of our connection with England. I pray you to give a mandate to the delegates that you are sending to the National Congress that this shall be the first and the foremost question to be considered. (Hear, hear.) Make it an all-India question. (Hear, hear). It is not a question affecting a mere territorial redistribution. The issues are much

graver than that. The question is whether the public opinion of a great province is to be flouted and treated with undisguised contempt in a matter which vitally affects the interests of that province. It is in another form and in a different garb the old question of the assertion of popular opinion, the vindication of the principle of self-government. (*Hear, hear*).

I will not detain you much longer. If I have not exhausted your patience I certainly have exhausted mine. (*Cries from all sides "Go on"*). In conclusion, I would make an earnest appeal to you once again on behalf of Swadeshim. Gather round the Swadeshi movement and uplift its banner. (*Hear, hear*). Carry it from village to village, from town to town and from district to district—spread the glad tidings of great joy throughout the length and breadth of this great Presidency. Swadeshim will save us from famine and pestilence and the nameless horrors which follow in the train of poverty. (*Hear, hear*). Take the Swadeshi vow and you will have laid broad and deep the foundations of your industrial and political emancipation. (*Hear, hear*.) Be Swadeshi in all things, in your thoughts and actions, in your ideals and aspirations. Bring back the ancient days of purity and self-sacrifice. Restore the Aryavarta of olden times when the Rishis sang the praises of God and did good to men. (*Cheers*). All Asia is astir with the pulsations of a new life. The sun has risen in the East. Japan has saluted the rising sun. That sun in its meridian splendour will pass through our country. (*Hear, hear*). Oh, prepare yourselves for the advent of that glorious day. (*Hear, hear*). Dedicate yourselves with absolute self-denial to the service of your motherland. Let us consecrate ourselves to the

service of this great and ancient land. Let all differences be buried, all strifes and animosities allayed, and let the jarring notes of party dissensions be hushed in the presence of the prostrate form of our motherland. Swadeshism does not exclude foreign ideals or foreign learning or foreign arts and industries, but insists that they shall be assimilated into the national system, be moulded after the national pattern and be incorporated into the life of the nation. Such is my conception of Swadeshism. Once again, in the name of Swadeshism, I ask you to take the Swadeshi vow that from this day forward you will devote yourselves life and soul to the service of your motherland. (*Hear, hear*). Live and die for her—(*hear, hear*)—and may God and your Country be glorified. “Bande Mataram.” (*Loud applause*).

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# SPEECHES IN ENGLAND.

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## THE MEETING IN FINSBURY.

*[The first of a series of public meetings convened under the auspices of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, in furtherance of the movement for a reform on a partially elective basis of the nominated Councils in India, was held in the Forresters' Hall, Clerkenwell Road, on Monday, April 14th, 1890. The chair was taken by Sir William Wedderburn, Bart. Babu Surendranath Banerjee on being called upon to address the meeting, spoke as follows :—]*

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I appear before you, commissioned by the Indian National Congress to lay our grievances and to appeal to you for redress. I confess that I feel myself unequal to the magnitude of the task, and the greatness of the trust which has been reposed in me, but I am supported, and encouraged by the conviction which is deep in me, that feeble as the advocate may be, great is the cause which he has the honour to represent—*(Cheers)*—and that the claims for liberty and justice on the part of two hundred millions of human beings, whose destinies an all-wise Providence has entrusted to your care, cannot but appeal with irresistible force to the deepest instincts of the English people. I have read in a book, held divine by you, which affords consolation and comfort to

the millions of your people, a book which is one of the noblest that adorn the literature of mankind, that, "Righteousness exalteth a Nation." I have read your history—read it with profit and delight, and if there is one lesson more than another which it enforces, if there is one truth more than another which shines forth in lines of light from every page of that brilliant record, it is again the grand old scriptural text, "Righteousness exalteth a nation." (*Cheers*). I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, extend to us in relation to the government of your Indian Empire that righteousness which has made you what you are, to enforce the fulfilments of solemn promises—(*Hear, hear*)—the redemption of sacred pledges, which have been uttered in your name and on your behalf by the Parliament of this country, and by the ruling authorities of India—

#### PLEDGES AND PROMISES,

which I regret to say, up to this moment

#### REMAIN INADEQUATELY REDEEMED,

and, I ask you, finally—and this forms the most important part of my appeal to you—to extend to us in part, at least, those representative institutions, which have followed in the path of English power and civilization, and which, wherever they have been established, have inaugurated a new era of peace, prosperity, and happiness to the peoples concerned. (*Cheers*). It is with some measure of confidence that I appeal to you in respect to this matter, for you have already done the people of India the great honour of nominating one of the most distinguished of our countrymen as your Liberal candidate for representation in Parliament. (*Cheers*). Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has won for himself, by his devoted public services extending through the period of a

lifetime, the esteem, the confidence, and the admiration of all classes of the Indian community, and he has set before us, the men of a younger generation, an ideal, a lofty ideal, of public duty which it is impossible for us ever to hope to attain to. I only trust that you may lead him to victory—(*Cheers*)—and that it will be possible for him primarily to serve his constituents, and, in the next place, to serve the voiceless and unrepresented millions of India. (*Cheers*). Ladies and gentlemen,

ENGLAND HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR MANKIND. Unique is the record of her achievements not only in war and in diplomacy, but also in those higher spheres of human activity with which we are accustomed to associate the advancement of human civilization. Brilliant as this record is, permit me to say, and I am entitled to speak with authority upon a matter of this kind coming from the East, that its character is fully sustained by the nature of her Indian work. To have found a great nation sunk in the depths of superstition, to have raised them to a higher level of civilization, to have communicated to them the breath of a new life—the pulsations of a new civilization are titles to glory all her own. There was indeed a time when India was the cradle of civilization, the home of learning and of the arts ; we look back upon the times even now with feelings of pride and affection. Long before the name and fame of Rome had been heard of, before Alexander had marched his armies to the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, while Babylon was yet in the height of her glory and her prosperity, our fathers had cultivated a language and had developed a system of morals and a system of religion, which, whatever we may think of them now by

the light of more advanced views on these subjects, still continue to excite the attention and to elicit the admiration of the civilized world. (*Cheers*). Those days are past and gone, centuries of mis-government and of the domination of a priestly order to which, fortunately or unfortunately, I have the honour to belong, have produced their legitimate consequences. It was at a time of supreme national humiliation and misery, when our native governments were fast falling to pieces, when even the elements of social order were threatened with destruction, that England came to our rescue, not indeed through motives of philanthropy but impelled by the love of gain and the lust of conquest. (*Cheers*). Nevertheless England has done a great deal for India but

MUCH MORE YET REMAINS TO BE DONE.

(*Hear, hear*). Under English auspices we enjoy the blessings of peace and orderly government. (*Hear, hear*). England has conferred upon us the inestimable boon of higher English education, the priceless gift of a free press and the right of free discussion. Our Universities are turning out year by year, thousands of graduates and under-graduates, men steeped in the literature of the West, steeped in your political philosophy and your political principles. Having become instructed in European knowledge they are craving for European institutions ; and having lived for so long under these influences not only has a great change taken place in the outward and the material circumstances of the country, but

A VISIBLE NATIONAL AWAKENING IS TO BE SEEN ON

ALL SIDES.

(*Hear, hear*). A silent revolution has been effected, a bloodless revolution indeed, but one which is unequalled

in the annals of mankind, except by what is to be seen in your own history when the seeds of the Reformation were transplanted into this country and sown upon English soil. Such a consummation so noble, so creditable to the English nation had indeed been anticipated by those illustrious men who had founded the English Empire, those great men, the grand old men of a former epoch of whom I fear you have only one left, who realized not only the glories but also the responsibilities of Imperial sway. Macaulay, to whom reference has already been made by the Chairman, speaking on the occasion of the enactment of the Charter Act of 1837, used language which reading it at this distance of time by the light of accomplished facts seems to me, as I am sure it will seem to you, to have about it the ring of prophetic inspiration. He said, "It may be that the public mind of India may so expand under our system as to outgrow that system ; that our subjects being brought up under good government may develop a capacity for better government, that being instructed in European knowledge they may crave for European institutions. I know not whether such a day will ever come ; but when it does come it will be the proudest day in English history . . . ." This consummation so devoutly, so eagerly looked for, has now been accomplished, and it is our earnest hope and prayer as I trust it will be your deliberate resolve, that those who are in charge of the Government of India and who are responsible to you for that Government, will so administer its affairs as to be worthy of this historical occasion and of the duty which devolves upon them on such an occasion. Ladies and gentlemen, this change—in fact it is the ground-work of the demand which I am about to



submit to you—has been so far-reaching, so vast, so significant in many ways, as to have even attracted the attention of a class of men who are not very much alive to considerations of this nature. Our officials—and I desire to speak of them with the utmost possible respect—as a rule have

NO EYE, NO INSTINCT, FOR THE PERCEPTION OF  
THOSE CHANGES,

which take place deep in the inner strata of society. But it so happens that in our case there has been a fortunate exception, and Sir Auckland Colvin, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, was so impressed by the character and significance of this change that he felt himself called upon to use the pregnant phraseology of the Bible in describing it. In a pamphlet that he wrote in 1884, he said, "The dry bones in the open valley have become instinct with life," and he went on to ask, "Are we alone to remain stationary while all things else are moving forward in India? Are we not to adapt the genius of our constitution to the genius of the altered time?" That is the question which he asks, and that is the question which I desire to put to you, and may the response come deep from your hearts, and may it be such as will be in accordance with the noble instincts of the English people and the great traditions of English rule. (*Applause*). Ladies and gentlemen, the Indian National Congress, which has sent me here, is the highest expression and the noblest embodiment of this spirit of reform, this spirit of change which is manifesting itself in Indian society. In the words of a great Indian statesman, it is the "soundest triumph of British Government." It seems to me marvellous that Englishmen should be found who view with suspicion and distrust

a movement of this nature. I hope there are no such Englishmen at any rate in this kingdom, but I fear there are a good many in India. We have, however, no misgivings whatsoever with regard to the attitude of the British public with reference to this grand national movement. The other day a discussion took place with reference to this matter in the House of Lords, and it is with a sense of gratitude that I refer to the sympathetic utterances of men like Lord Northbrook, Lord Kimberley, and Lord Ripon with regard to the Congress movement. *(Cheers)*. But I have even a higher authority than these. Mr. Gladstone—*(Cheers)*—in a speech which he delivered at Lime-house some time the year before last, in referring to the National Congress, used language which at the present moment seems to be ringing in my ears. He said : “ It is not right, it is not proper, that we should treat with contempt or even with indifference.

THE RISING ASPIRATIONS OF THIS GREAT PEOPLE.”

Such is the language of the greatest of living statesmen—*(Cheers)*,—and I am perfectly convinced that it represents the voice of the great body of the English people. Ladies and gentlemen, you may naturally ask me, what is this National Congress ? Well, the Congress is a great gathering of delegates, which takes place once a year, about Christmas time, in some Indian capital, for the discussion of political questions and the settlement of a common political programme. The delegates are duly elected in the same way as I venture to think, your members of Parliament are elected : they are elected by constituencies in the various divisions of the Empire. It is computed that about three millions of the Indian population took part in the election of the delegates of the National Congress who attended at

Bombay last year: ("No, no"). I hear a dissentient voice ; I should be glad if the gentleman who protests would be good enough to state his facts and figures which contradict this view—figures which I have the honour to lay before this meeting. For his edification, for the edification of all concerned, and for the information of the British public, I once again reaffirm the proposition which elicited that dissent, that no less than

THREE MILLIONS OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE TOOK PART

IN THE ELECTION

of the delegates last year—(*cheers*),—and the delegates thus elected as faithfully represent the views of those by whom they are returned as your members of the House of Commons reflect the sentiments and the ideas of their constituents. Yet there are men who tell us that we are unfit for representative government and for the elective system. ("Shame !"). We would point to this organization of the Congress and tell them this : Here is this vast, this stupendous, this colossal organization, with its thousands of members, with its branches and ramifications, extending from one part of the Empire to the other, all constituted upon a representative basis, and is it open to the Indian Government after that to say that their Legislative Councils are not capable of a similar treatment ? (*Cheers*). Well, the National Congress is an institution of recent growth, but I know of no movement in connection with modern India which exhibits greater vitality or a greater measure of strength, and a greater capacity for growth than this infant institution. Let me take you for a minute or two over the facts of the case. The first National Congress was held in Bombay in 1885, and the number of delegates present was only seventy ; the second Congress was

held in Calcutta, in the following year, and what do you think was the number of delegates present? Not seventy, but six times seventy, the number being four hundred and thirty-six. The third National Congress was held in Madras, and the number attending was over six hundred; the fourth National Congress was held in Allahabad and, in spite of the opposition of the local officials, the number went up to between twelve and thirteen hundred, while last year at the Congress held at Bombay, the numbers were nearly two thousand. And, gentlemen, in this connection there is an incident to which I desire to call your attention. On the last day of the meeting of the National Congress, we had placed before that body a resolution containing an appeal for funds to the extent of £4,000, and what do you think was the response which this appeal elicited? Instead of £4,000, £6,000, were subscribed in half an hour's time—(*cheers*),—and £1,000 was paid down on the spot. And yet we have the veracious correspondent of a leading journal of this metropolis who has the effrontery to assure the British public that a movement which has behind it so much earnestness and so much enthusiasm, which is based upon the eternal and unchangeable principles of justice and liberty, was about to collapse. Much more likely that leading journals would collapse—(*cheers*)—than such beneficent organizations for the promotion of human good. Ladies and gentlemen, you may possibly want to know from me what it is we want; what is the question to which above all others we assign the foremost place—what is the chief plank in our platform? I think I shall best discharge my duty by telling you in a few brief concise terms

WHAT IT IS WE DO NOT WANT,  
 because we have been credited with a great many things for which we do not deserve credit. Our trade-mark has been put upon a number of articles which really do not belong to us. (*Laughter*). Let me say at once very distinctly and very emphatically, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Indian National Congress, on behalf of the educated community throughout India, that :

WE DO NOT WISH TO SEE INSTALLED IN OUR  
 MIDST ANYTHING LIKE A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF  
 GOVERNMENT.

We do not think India is ripe for it yet : nor do we want Home Rule, though if we did I am sure a great many Englishmen would sympathise with us. (*Hear, hear*). We want something even much less than an English House of Commons, and therefore, with the assurance of absolute confidence, we appeal to the generous sympathies and the warm support of all sections, and all classes of the English community, Liberals and Conservatives, Whigs and Tories, whatever may be the character and the complexion of their political faith. We take our stand upon one of those maxims which you have taught us—"No taxation without representation." (*Cheers*). And we press for the reform of the Legislative Councils which impose the taxes and make the laws. Our Councils are absolute, utter, unqualified, unmitigated shams. I use very strong language ; I use it advisedly and deliberately with a full sense of the responsibility I incur. I say once again that our Councils are absolute shams. The members are all nominated by the Government. Not one of them owes his seat to the suffrages of the people, or to the confidence

or esteem of his fellow countrymen. Not one of them has the right to ask a single question of the Executive Government with reference to any matter of finance or with reference to any matter of administration, foreign or domestic. Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you what would you think if your Parliament, if all the members thereof were nominees of the Crown passed under the seal of the Lord Chancellor of England, if they were shorn of all their useful and varied functions, if there was no opposition worth the name, if their debates were of a formal and academic character, if their conclusions were foregone conclusions which did not even serve to test the strength of the rival parties? Our members are indebted for their seats to the Government, and they look forward to their re-nomination by the Government. I ask : Is it possible for men thus constituted to say anything which would be in opposition to the views and the opinions of the Executive Government? It is not in human nature to rise to such heights of self-denial, and our Councillors after all are human beings. They are not angels, emanations of the all-beauteous mind. The result is that laws are passed which would never be passed in any other country, except under strong protest and remonstrance. Therefore, it is that we press for this reform. Let me give you one illustration in order to point out

**THE ABSOLUTELY WORTHLESS CHARACTER OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE BODIES.**

You know we have to pay a heavy salt-tax ; I do not suppose you pay anything of the kind here. It would be the same thing as if a heavy tax on meat were imposed by your Government. I am sure you would resent it very strongly. Well, we pay something like two

thousand per cent. as a tax on the cost of the manufacture of salt, and this is paid not only by the rich but also by the poor, millions of whom have only one meal a day, according to the authority of Sir William Hunter. (" *Shame!* "). Well, now not long ago it became necessary to obtain some money. The Government of India was in one of those chronic fits of bankruptcy which are the normal condition of the Indian Government. They wanted money, and the proposal was to raise the salt-tax. What do you think was done? The proposal was laid before the Council, and a scene was witnessed which would have been impossible in any other country, in any other legislative Government. A valiant knight from Bombay, now a worthy baronet was the first to offer his felicitations, to the Government for having proposed a measure which served to cut down the scanty and miserable subsistence of the poor man, and an equally chivalrous Rajah from the suburbs of Calcutta followed suit. Not a single word of warning, not a single voice of protest, barring the feeble notes of a Mohamedan Councillor was raised in that Council against a provision which, in any other country, or under any other Government would have been impossible. Now,

WE DESIRE TO REMODEL AND REFORM THIS COUNCIL. We say that half the members of the Council should be elected, the other half to be nominated by the Government, the President also being a member of the Government, the Government, you will see, will have a majority in any case. But what does Lord Cross say with reference to this matter? He says, " No, the elective element is not to be introduced into the Legislative Councils of India." Further we ask that the right of interpellation,

the right of asking questions of the Executive Government, should be conferred upon members of Council. Lord Cross says, in the Bill which he has introduced, "That right is conceded, but it is to be so whittled down that you will have only a semblance or a shadow of the real thing. No resolutions will be permitted upon official replies." Lastly, we want that the Budget should be discussed in Council. Even here,

WHAT IS CONFERRED WITH ONE HAND IS TAKEN AWAY  
WITH THE OTHER,

because no motions are to be permitted upon the countless items included in the Budget. Well, I must say that I have read with very great interest the debate in the House of Lords in connection with this Bill, though I declare my inability to follow some of the arguments which have been adduced. I wish to speak with the utmost possible respect of Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, but I fear, having read that debate very carefully, that Lord Salisbury has not yet been able to overcome that racial prejudice of which there was such a conspicuous display in connection with the "black man" incident. (*Cheers*). My friend. "the black man," is on this platform—(*cheers*)—and I hope he will pardon me for this passing reference to an incident in his political career which he can now afford to forget and forgive. Lord Salisbury says that the Eastern races are unfit for the elective system, and he instances the cases of Greece, Egypt, and of Turkey. But as far as the people of India are concerned, this argument has been adduced somewhat late in the day, for

OUR ENTIRE SYSTEM OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IS  
BASED UPON THE ELECTIVE SYSTEM,  
and that system has been pronounced to be a conspicu-



ous success. It is because we have been so successful in reference to the elective system in regard to our local matters that we ask you to extend it to the wider concerns of the Provinces and of the Empire. But Lord Salisbury is a little bit of an ethnologist : we are of the East, we are of Eastern lineage, and therefore the elective system is not suited to us. I desire to point out that though we come from the East, yet we are sprung from the same stock from which you are derived—(*cheers*)—the Indo-Aryan branch of the human family. We are, in fact, your distant kinsmen, and Lord Mayo in one of those admirable speeches which he made on the occasion of the introduction of local self-government in 1868 and 1869 remarked that self-governing institutions form an essential feature of the civilisation of the Aryan. Indeed our Panchayat system and our village communities are as old as the hills, and are graven deep on the instincts of our race. But suppose what Lord Salisbury says were to be accepted as conclusive : does not the fact imply a very grievous reflection upon British rule ? It comes to this—that we, the descendants of the ancient Aryans, inheriting by our blood-relationship the instinctive traditions of self-government, have become so degraded by contact with English people that, after a century of British rule, we have become unfit for this small effort in the art of self-government. I am sure Lord Salisbury will not accept a position so unwelcome to the national sentiment and one so inconsistent with truth. It is well that we should remind Conservative statesmen of a little fact which they are apt to forget. In the year 1858 Mr Disraeli was called upon to draft a Bill for the constitution of the House of Commons, and he actually proposed that the Council of the Secretary of

State, the highest Council in connection with the Indian Empire should be

CONSTITUTED UPON A REPRESENTATIVE BASIS, and that half the members should be elected (*cheers*) and now, after a lapse of thirty years, after the lifetime of a generation has passed, after great changes have taken place in India, Conservative statesmen are unwilling to apply Mr. Disraeli's principle to Councils subordinate to those to which he himself was prepared to extend it. Am I to understand that Conservative statesmen have forgotten the noble traditions consecrated by the name and fame of the most illustrious Conservative statesman of his generation ; or have they forgotten those nobler principles embalmed in that remarkable document which we regard as the Magna Charta of our rights and privileges, the Proclamation of the Queen which was issued by a Conservative Government and embodied the views of a Conservative Ministry. But, ladies and gentlemen, I have no fear. From Conservatives and from Liberals alike we appeal to the ruling democracy of England. We have great

CONFIDENCE IN THE JUSTICE AND THE GENEROSITY  
OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

We have abounding faith in the liberty-loving instincts of the greatest representative assembly in the world—the British House of Commons, the mother of Parliaments, where sits enthroned the newly-enfranchised democracy of those islands. To whatever party you belong, Liberals or Conservatives, Whigs or Tories, you all owe an indefeasible allegiance to that which forms the key-stone of your constitution, the representative principle; the right of the people to have a voice in the government of their own country. (*Cheers*). Your

history is the history of the growth, the progress and the triumph of the representative principle ; your literature is pervaded by the same lofty spirit of freedom. Wherever Englishmen have gathered together, wherever they have formed their colonies—whether it be amid the blazing heat of the equatorial regions, or in those distant continents watered by the Southern seas—wherever Englishmen have raised their flag and have formed their governments they have formed them upon

THE REPRESENTATIVE MODEL AND THE  
REPRESENTATIVE BASIS.

We are not of English lineage, or of English blood, but we have been nurtured upon the strong food of constitutional freedom. You have taught us to admire the political philosophy of Burke ; the eloquence and genius of Fox, Pitt, and Sheridan. We have been brought face to face, and in contact with the struggles and the triumphs of your Puritan fathers. We have read, with great admiration, the stately and triumphant march of constitutional freedom, culminating in the revolution of 1688. (*Cheers*). And you must take us to be something less than human, you must deprive us of that warm sensibility of our Eastern natures, if you think that after having lived under these influences and imbibed these impressions, we were not fired with a lofty ambition and a noble enthusiasm to transplant into our own country the spirit of those free institutions which have made you what you are. (*Cheers*). We ask, are you prepared to stifle in our breasts those ambitions and those aspirations which you have kindled in them—are you prepared to extinguish in us that noble ardour for freedom and free institutions, which is of English origin, and has on it the impress of its English parentage ?

Ladies and gentlemen, you have raised for yourselves a mighty Empire in the East—an Empire which has been won by the valour of your soldiers, and the statesmanship of your administrators. But there is an Empire nobler far than that, an Empire which is graven deep on the affections, the gratitude, and the contentment of a great and prosperous people. I ask you to aspire to this imperial sway in India, which will be worthy of a great and Christian people, and which will throw in the shade your proudest achievements in history. Let me say, once again, before I sit down, that I plead for my voiceless countrymen ; I plead for liberty and justice, and if these words have any import, any weight, any signification among a Christian people, I am sure I shall not have pleaded in vain—I am sure your best efforts will be put forth on behalf of those vast and multitudinous races of the East, of whose well-being you are responsible to Providence, and who

KNOW NO HIGHER TRIBUNAL THAN THE TRIBUNAL OF  
THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

Ladies and gentlemen, lead them along the path of progress which you have sketched out for them. Confer upon them the inestimable boon of representative institutions. Discharge your duty to India, the noblest duty that ever fell to the lot of any nation, Christian or heathen, ancient or modern, and then you will not only have performed a great national duty, which yet remains unfulfilled, but you will have consolidated the foundations of British rule, and placed it broadbased upon the affection, the gratitude, the contentment of a vast and multitudinous people. (*Loud and long continued cheering*).

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## THE DEBATE AT THE OXFORD UNION.

*[Question for debate "That this House views with regret the non-recognition of the elective principle in the Indian Councils Bill now before Parliament." Moved by Mr. Eardley Norton, B. A., Meston, opposed by Mr. J. J. W. Galbraith, Oriel, Secretary. The debating Hall of the Oxford Union Society was well filled on Thursday, May 22nd, 1890, to hear Mr. Eardley Norton and Babu Surendranath Benerjea, the delegates from the Indian National Congress, upon the subject of Indian reform. The chair was taken by Mr. F. H. Collier, Christ Church, President of the Society.]*

Babu Surendranath Benerjea, who met with an enthusiastic reception, said he was greatly indebted to the House for the cordial reception which had been accorded to him, and he could assure the House that that reception would be to him a surce of encouragement and inspiration in the somewhat difficult task which he had undertaken that night. He craved the indulgence of the House for a few moments—he was afraid he would take some little time of the House—in discussing the numerous points which had been raised. He thought he would best discharge his duty by stating in the first place in a few plain words the situation in India, and the demand that they made in conformity with the requirements of that situation. What they said was this. The English Government had given them high English education, it had conferred upon them the inestimable boon of a free press, and last but not least it had conceded to them the gift of

local self-government based partially on the representative system. (*Cheers*). They had now for a period of more than fifty years lived under these influences. For more than fifty years they had enjoyed these blessings, and he thought the House would think they must be something less than human, if after living under these influences and imbibing these impressions, they were not inspired with a lofty enthusiasm to transplant into their country something of the spirit of the constitution which they had learnt to adore in the noble literature and noble history that England had taught them (*Cheers*). They asked England and the English people to gratify those aspirations which they had kindled in their breasts, and they made that demand not only upon purely sentimental grounds—grounds of emotion, grounds of sensibility, grounds of vague, undefined feeling—but because they were distinctly of opinion that the result of such a concession would be to add sensibly and visibly to the efficiency, and he was going to say, the stability of British rule in India. (*Cheers*). Such was the case, such were the grounds upon which their appeal was made to this House. (*Cheers*). He was somewhat surprised at some of the statements that had been made (*laughter*) by the gentleman (*Lord Hugh Cecil*) who had opposed the motion. He was somewhat in sympathy with him in his ignorance (*hear, hear*) ;—at the same time he felt it his duty to point out to him that he was grievously mistaken in some of the statements which he made he knew not upon what authority. He thought he did no injustice in that statement. (*Laughter*). The hon. gentleman said, in the first place, that English education was introduced into India in 1835. As a matter of fact, a Hindu

College had been established in Bengal in 1817. Not only that, but he would fall back on an authority held in high esteem by the hon. gentleman himself. He would quote Macaulay. Macaulay speaking in 1853 from his place in the House of Commons on the occasion of the enactment of the Charter Act referred to this wise step which had been taken by the Government. Let him quote the words because he had them in his memory. Macaulay said from his place in the House of Commons—Sir Robert Peel, Lord Lansdowne, and others taking part in the debate—Macaulay said,

It may be that the public mind of India may so expand under our system that it may out-grow that system, and our subjects having been brought up under good Government may develop a capacity for better Government.

And this is the most important passage—

That having been instructed in European learning, they may crave for European institutions. (*Cheers*). I know not whether such a day will ever come but if it does come it will be the proudest day in the annals of England.

On the authority of Macaulay, on the authority which the hon. opposer himself claimed, he maintained that the noble day which had been so longingly looked forward to, the proudest day in the annals of England had arrived, and it was for the English people to prove themselves worthy of the occasion (*cheers*), and he hoped and trusted their vote to-night would be a vote which would strengthen that public opinion which was after all the moral support of all Governments. (*Cheers*). He was somewhat amazed at some of the figures which were quoted by the gentlemen who opposed. He expected some such opposition, and he came armed with all the facts. (*Cheers*). He was glad he had got his authorities before him.

Here he would quote the figures and they would tell a tale which no amount of rhetoric would ever do. The fact was this, that at the present moment they had more than three millions of their population who attended schools and colleges. And the English people who had representative institutions in such a perfectly developed form at the present moment, and have had representative institutions of that form for a period of fifty years and more, could only put forward three millions of students in 1881. In 1881 they had full-blown representative institutions, and they were in a position to send 670 members to the House of Commons. In India they had no representative institutions whatever, nothing even worthy the name of even elementary representative institutions, and yet their people were highly educated on the basis of these facts. Let him read a quotation from a speech of Mr. George Yule :

Since 1858 about twenty millions of pounds have been spent on educational institutions. The number of these institutions at the present time is 122,000 attended by upwards of 3,800,000 students. The number of schools in England in 1821 was only 18,467 and the scholars 650,000. These, however, have rapidly increased during the last twenty years, but it was not till 1881 they reached the number of the schools and scholars in India.

And to go to another official authority, here is Mr. Growse, a very eminent antiquarian, who says :

My own opinion in which I am yearly more and more confirmed, is that the average of happiness, intelligence, culture, and general information is as high in an Indian as in an English village." (*Cheers*).

He thought as far as the educational aspect of the question was concerned it might be taken for granted that they were not the barbarians they were represented



to be. (*Cheers*). The statement was made in the course of this debate that the Indians before the advent of the English were a pack of barbarians or semi-barbarians ; he believed that was the language that was used. Let him remind this House that they came—the Hindus of India, the race to which he had the honour to belong—(*loud cheers*)—they came from a great and ancient stock, that at the time the ancestors of the most enlightened European nations were roaming in their native woods and forests, their fathers had founded great empires, established noble cities and cultivated a system of ethics, a system of religion, and a noble language which at the present moment excited the admiration of the civilized world. (*loud cheers*). They had only to walk across the way, and place themselves in the Bodleian library to witness the ancient records of Indian industry, Indian culture, and Indian ethics ; therefore it seemed to him the remark was somewhat out of place. (*Cheers*). If the remark was made to prejudice the claim which they had now the honour to put forward, to prejudice their claim for representative institutions, never was it more misplaced, for the simple reason that self-governing institutions formed an essential feature of the civilization of the Aryan race, and they came from the Aryan stock. (*Cheers*). The hon. opposer of the motion was pleased to refer to the authority of Sir Henry Maine in reference to certain quotation he made. He (the speaker) was prepared to bow to that authority, and accept him as an authority on Indian matters. What did he say in reference to India? The first practical illustrations of self-governing institutions were to be found in the early records of India. Their village communities were as old as the hills. (*Cheers*). When they asked for representative institutions,

or a partial concession of representative institutions, they asked for something which was in entire accord with the genius and the temper of the people of India, in entire accord with the traditions of their history, and in entire accord with the tenor of British rule in India. What had they done? As he had already remarked the British Government had conceded local self-government on an elective basis. They had a system of local self-government, based on the representative model, in Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and the North-West Provinces; the whole country was scattered broadcast with municipal institutions based on the representative model, and what was the official opinion with regard to them? They had been pronounced to be a conspicuous success. (*Cheers*). And what they said was this, they took their stand upon the achievement that had already been made upon the success that had already been attained—they said to the Government, "You have applied the representative principle, the elective system, to the administration of our local affairs, and the administration of our local affairs has been pronounced to be a conspicuous success, and therefore on the basis of past experience we appeal to you to extend the elective system, the representative principle, to the wider concerns of the Provinces and the Empire at large." (*Cheers*). He asked that House, was it possible by any show of reason or plausibility to dislodge them from a position so logical, so consistent, so unassailable? (*Cheers*). They had been tried, and they had not been found wanting. (*Loud cheers*). Therefore upon the basis of past experience they asked them to extend the representative system (*Cheers*). He found another misconception in the speech of the hon. opposer of this

motion' (Lord Hugh Cecil), in fact, the speech bristled with misconceptions. The words "democratic government" occurred at every third line of his speech. They did not want democratic government: (*Cheers*). When they were fit for it they would come and pray for it. At the present moment they did not consider themselves qualified for democratic government, or for Home Rule, or for Parliamentary institutions. Their demands were exceedingly moderate. He had only to state them before an English audience in order to point out how exceedingly cautious they were in their proposals. At the present moment their Councils were entirely nominative. He should have something to say with reference to the sham character of these Councils by-and-by: They were entirely nominative—the members were all nominated by the Government, and they told the Government they had tried that experiment long enough; it was pronounced to be a failure from one end of the country to the other. (*Cheers*). Even the official organs of public opinion said that, and therefore they asked to have half the members nominated, the other half to be elected. And not only that, but the President would be a Member of the Government, and therefore in these Legislative Councils the Government would always and infallibly have a majority. Not only that, they were so anxious that nothing should be done to hamper the Government in any way or to relax the bonds of Executive authority, that they actually reserved the power of veto to the Government, so that the Government might supersede or set aside any decision arrived at by a majority of the Council. All they required in such cases was that the reasons for the supersession must be stated. Was there in this demand any approach to

democratic Governments, to Home Rule, or to Parliamentary institutions ? (*Cheers*). And was it not desirable to consider the great advances that had taken place in the circumstances of the Government and of the country, and was it not necessary that some reform of this kind should be made ? (*Hear, hear*). He said that the English Government could not stand still where it was at the present moment. (*Cheers*). It would be dangerous to stand still ; it would be positively mischievous to fall back. There was one course of policy open to the English Government in India, namely to advance steadily, cautiously, wisely, deliberately, along the line of prudence and beneficence which had been marked out by the former policy of illustrious Anglo-Indian administrators. (*Cheers*). They asked the Government to do this and no more. Reference had been made to their divergent religious beliefs. Had they not that in this country, might he ask ? Protestants burnt Roman Catholics three hundred years ago, and the Roman Catholics paid back the compliment in the same way, and not very far from the place where they had met that night. They in India had never done that. (*Cheers*). They occasionally had some little controversies, but nothing equal to the bitter controversies that they had had in this country. Let him relate to them an incident, if he was not trespassing on the patience of the House (*cries of "Go on"*) to show the harmony that existed between Hindus and Mohamedans. About two years ago there was a dispute between the Sunnies and the Shias. These were the two great sects into which the Mohamedans were divided and at a great meeting, for the purposes of settling the dispute, which was held in the capital of Mohamedan

influence and power, the ancient capital of Mohamedan greatness, what did they think was the outcome of their deliberations? Actually four Hindu gentlemen were appointed for the purpose of settling the matters of dispute affecting the religious ceremonies of the Mohamedans. (*Cheers*). He should like to know how many Protestants would appoint Roman Catholics for the purpose of settling any such differences. (*Hear, hear*). Therefore, this religious dispute was a matter which had been vastly magnified, but only for a particular object, namely, to throw difficulties in the way of representative institutions in India. (*Cheers*). But even if the differences were much wider, much deeper, much more bitter than what they were, he claimed upon the basis of historical facts that differences in respect of religious matters were no bar to the introduction of representative institutions. (*Cheers*). The Austrians and Hungarians fought with the utmost bitterness and animosity, but all their differences of opinion had been settled by the saving principle of representative Government. He took it that this was really no argument to which any great importance should be attached. Lastly, as to social questions, it was said they paid no attention to social matters, but he was sorry to say here again there was a misconception, a misreading, a misinterpretation of Indian History. The hon. gentleman who alluded to this subject seemed not to have understood that the National Congress movement was only a political manifestation of a great national upheaval, which had taken place not only in respect of politics, but also in respect of religion and social institutions. It must not be supposed that the National Congress movement represented the cackling of a number of educated Baboos or

"much-speaking Bengalees," to use the language of the opposer of the motion. It represented something vaster than that, something far more comprehensive, far more significant, something which was likely to produce consequences of the very greatest importance as regarded the fortunes of the people and the Government. In consequence of those agencies to which he had referred there had been a revolution in the national mind, and it had been felt in every department of human thought, in religion, in social questions, and in politics. In politics, fortunately or unfortunately as the case might be, they moved along the line of least resistance, and therefore the intensity had been most keenly felt there ; but as a matter of fact it would be a mistake to confine its bearings to the National Congress, to overlook the influences which had been felt in the departments of religious and social thought. The National Congress was supplemented by a Social Conference, and not only that, but a revival of Hinduism was going on of which they had no idea, because it was not necessary for them to write their tracts in English for the edification of the British public. They appealed to their people in their own language in order that they might be religious, but when they had to obtain political liberties they had to appeal to the English people, consequently they thought they were only politically engaged, whereas as a matter of fact they were engaged in matters of social as well as religious reform. (*Cheers*). He wished to tell the House that they were a deeply religious people. The religious reform movement was the first in point of time, as it was the first in point of importance. Rammohan Roy was the founder of Brahmoism, the monotheistic creed of new India. Rammohan Roy was the brightest pro-

duct of English education, and by a mysterious decree of fate England claimed his ashes ; he lay buried at Bristol. The religious movement preceded all other movements, then followed the social movement, inaugurated by Pundit Iswara Chander Vidyasagar, and the National Congress came last, and therefore in point of logical sequence it was the last in point of importance, but as far their rulers were concerned it was the greatest. That was really the state of things. He just wished to point out to that House, before he sat down, that this was really not a party question at all. (*Cheers*). It was a question of national and Imperial justice. They bound themselves to no parties, they appealed for justice to all, and they had illustrious names on their side of the question belonging to both ranks of English party politics. That illustrious politician and diplomatist there—(pointing to a portrait of Lord Dufferin)—who was a President of that Union, had in a despatch recommended the recognition of the elective system in the constitution of the Legislative Councils ; the House would attach very great importance to an expression of opinion coming from so illustrious a man, having behind him the weight of Indian experience. (*Cheers*). Not only that, but another President of that Union, Sir Henry Harrison, was in favour of the elective system ; and there were men, too, on the Liberal side of the House with them. (*Cheers*). Let him refer to some names on the other side. Take, for instance, Sir Richard Temple and Sir Richard Garth, the late Chief Justice of Bengal. (*Cheers*). Thus, therefore, the matter was one in which no party interests were concerned, which appealed to that common sense of justice and fair play, that found predominance in every English breast. (*Cheers*), , Represent-

tative institutions were a consecrated possession which in the counsels of Providence had been entrusted to the English people. He quite admitted that it was for the English people to guard that possession, to spread it, and not to make it the property of this people, or that people, but the heritage of mankind at large. England was the home of representative institutions ; from England as the centre, representative institutions had spread far and wide until this country had justly been called the august mother of free nations. The people of India were children of that mother, and they claimed their birthright, they claimed to be admitted into the rights of British citizens and British fellow subjects. He was perfectly certain that such an appeal made to the English people could meet with but one response—a response of sympathy, and a readiness to grant it. (*Cheers*). He pleaded before that House for justice ; he pleaded for liberty not inconsistent with British supremacy, but tending to consolidate its foundations and he was perfectly convinced that so long as these words, these sacred words, had any weight, any meaning, any signification amongst Englishmen and in that House, they would record, by an unanimous vote, an emphatic vote, their sympathy with their aspirations, their desire that India should be governed according to those eternal principles of justice and liberty, which were engraved deep in the hearts, the convictions, and feelings of Englishmen to whatever party, to whatever creed, to whatever sect they might belong. (*Loud and prolonged cheering*).

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## RECEPTION AT THE HOUSE OF MR. E. C. SCHWANN, M.P.

[On Tuesday night 17th June, 1890, at Prince's Garden, Mr. E. C. Schwann, M. P., and Mrs. Schwann gave a dinner party to the Congress Delegates and held a reception in their honour. Babu Surendranath Banerjea in addressing the assembly spoke as follows] :—

Ladies and gentlemen, my first difficulty is that I am on a chair. I am accustomed to stand upon a platform and to move about a little, but here I am "cabined, cribbed, confined" within the limits of a chair. But my first words will be words of acknowledgment for the hospitality of our kind host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Schwann, and what is still more, for the opportunity they have afforded us of meeting so many distinguished persons and talking in an informal way on a subject which is so near and dear to us. But the feeling which Mr. and Mrs. Schwann have shown in this matter represents really the universal British feeling on the subject. (*Hear, hear*). We have addressed as many as thirty meetings in different parts of the country, I may say in almost every part of the United Kingdom, and wherever we have been we have been received with open arms and with the utmost cordiality. I take it that this expression of kindness is the index and guarantee of the sympathy which animates the British public in regard to the legitimate aspirations of the people of India, and the constitutional methods which we follow in giving effect to those aspirations. Ladies and gentlemen, we shall go home—I

am going to-morrow—with a message of joy and of hope. We shall tell our countrymen there when we go back, that whatever may be their feeling of dissatisfaction with the Government of the country, the great heart of the English people is sympathetically disposed towards them ; that there is abundance of justice and abundance of desire on the part of the English people to give them the justice that they demand and to which they are fairly entitled. We feel that all we have to do is to make a simple statement of our case, to state it fairly and explicitly and "nought extenuate nor ought set down in malice," and then justice will be done to us. What we say is this. The British Government has given us education, it has given us a free press, it has given us local self-government, it has opened up the country, it has stimulated thought, it has ennobled, adorned, and illustrated the native Indian character, and the result is that a visible national awakening has taken place, and we call upon the Government to gratify those aspirations which it has awakened in our breasts. We say "You have given us knowledge, and you must take the consequences of that knowledge, you have followed a policy of beneficence towards the people of India, and lo ! and behold the fruits of that beneficence are before your eyes and it is not possible for you now to recoil, or fall back upon a policy of repression or of retrogression." It must be thankfully noted that the English conquerors of India from the first moment of their installation in power did their best to promote the material and moral interests of the people. In the early part of the century in Bengal the first English college was established. Then, in 1835, the liberty of the press was conferred, unasked, unsolicited, the

spontaneous act of a beneficent, kindly and Christian Government. Ladies and gentlemen, with your permission I would repeat the words, the memorable and historic words which Sir Charles Metcalfe made use of. A deputation waited upon him in Calcutta, and in reply to that deputation he said, "It cannot be that we are destined by an Almighty Providence to be here in India for the purpose only of collecting taxes and paying deficits; we are here for a higher and nobler purpose altogether, namely, to pour into the East the knowledge, culture, enlightenment, and civilization of the West." That was said in 1835. Then Lord Ripon, a name that will always remain enshrined in our grateful recollections, crowns this edifice of noble institutions, by giving us the great boon of local self-government. The result is that a change has taken place, a mighty change. A man who was in India thirty years ago, if he were to go back to that country would find its aspect changed to such a degree, that it would be almost impossible for him to believe that the country was the same as that which he visited thirty years ago. We are progressing, thanks to the impetus you have communicated to us, by leaps and bounds. *All that we ask is that the Government should accept the situation and prove themselves equal to it.* We call upon them to do it as much for their interest as for our interest. A despotic government may be a very good form of government in the early stage of civilization, but it becomes a curse and a crime after a certain stage (*hear, hear*), and I am afraid that that stage has fairly been reached at the present moment. Ladies gentlemen, you have no conception of the poverty the people of India. You read in books of the gorgeous

magnificence of the East, but these are words of fable and romance ; they have no reality whatsoever ; in the lurid light of facts they disappear altogether. The earnings of an Indian peasant amount to three pence a day. I do not think it possible to conceive of a people sunk in more squalid depths of poverty than the people of India. Then we have our famines, and we have a costly civil administration, and a bloated military establishment. Add to that the salt duties that are imposed, and the liquor laws, which, thanks to the exertions of our friend, Mr. Samuel Smith, have partly been removed and rectified. Then there is the police which is a scandal and a disgrace to civilization. The Government itself admits it, and it is taking steps towards remedying this state of things. Well, we say that in order to bring about a cure for this state of things, it is necessary that you should remodel and reconstitute the Government upon such a basis, that the people may have some voice in that Government. Therefore, taking our stand upon the grand old English principle that there shall be no taxation without representation, we press for the reform of the Legislative Councils, and we say that they should be reconstituted upon the representative model. Our Councils are absolute shams, unmitigated shams. I use strong language, but I speak very soberly and deliberately and under no excitement whatever. Sometimes men are appointed to these Councils who are ignorant of the English language itself, although the proceedings are carried on in that language. A remarkable case occurred the other day. A gentleman, an uncle of Rajah Rampal Singh, was appointed a member of the Vice-regal Council. He did not know a word of the Queen's

English. Rajah Rampal Singh was naturally anxious to know how his uncle got on without any knowledge of the language, and when he returned after the performance of his arduous legislative functions, his nephew asked, "Uncle, how did you manage to get on? You do not know English, and the proceedings were carried on in English." "Oh," he said, "I got on well enough. I had a very simple duty to perform. I owed my seat to the grace and favour of the Viceroy, so I closely watched him and when I found that he held his hands up, I held my hands up, and when I found that he dropped his hands I dropped mine, and he was so pleased with me that when I was coming away he actually shook me by the hand and said :—You have been a most useful member of this Council." (*Much laughter*). We are anxious that this race of "useful members" may be improved off the face of creation. We really wish to introduce something of reality into the semblance of a Council. Let there be no misconception. We do not want in the smallest degree to weaken stability, the permanence or the greatness of the British rule in India. We do not want Home Rule, we do not want Parliamentary Government, we do not want democratic institutions. We shall want them by-and-by, when the time comes, but for the present, we shall be satisfied with the small modicum of representative institutions that we pray for. We say that half the members of our Legislative Councils should be elected, and the other half nominated as before. The President would be a member of the Government, and, therefore, the Government will have a majority, and naturally, we are so anxious that nothing should be done to weaken the hands of the Government that we actually propose to

reserve to the Executive Government the right of veto, so that the Government may supersede any decision arrived at by the majority of the Council. Practically the Councils will be consultative councils. The difference would be this—it is a crucial point, and it is well that you should understand it—instead of the Government nominating our spokesmen, we shall have the right of electing them for ourselves. Therein lies all the difference between the present system and the system which we pray for. This is not a Party question, and we do not wish it to be treated as such. If it so happens that we find one party more than another showing us favour, and that we are thrown into the arms of one of these parties, the responsibility is not ours. We have tried our best in the Congress to treat the question, as far as practicable, from an impartial point of view, without any reference to Party consideration, and I may say that great names are found on both sides. There are Liberal leaders supporting our claims, and there are Tory leaders supporting our claims. There are such men as Lord Kimberley, Lord Northbrook, Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin, all recommending the elective system in the constitution of the Councils. Then amongst the Conservatives we have Sir Richard Temple and Sir Richard Garth supporting our claims, and not only so, but we can appeal to the high authority of Mr. Disraeli, who when he was Leader of the House of Commons in 1858, actually recommended that the highest council in connection with the Government of India should be reconstituted upon an elective basis, half the members being elected and the other half nominated. We want the same principle applied, not to the Indian Council, but to Councils of far less import-

tance and far less magnitude in connection with the Government of the Indian Empire. I am certain that all we have to do in connection with this matter is to go on pegging away, appealing again and again to those instincts of justice and liberty which are graven deep in the hearts and affections of the English people. We believe in our cause, we believe that persistency in constitutional agitation will culminate in the triumph of that cause, and above all we believe in the sense of justice and the sense of liberty of the English people: We shall, therefore, continue this agitation, and with your help and under God's providence we are bound to win in the noblest contest that has ever warmed the hearts or inspired the energies of men. (*Cheers*).

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## INDIA AND ENGLISH LITERATURE.

*[In the course of a discussion at a meeting of the Imperial Press Conference in London in 1909, Mr. Banerjea followed Lord Morley's speech on "Literature and Journalism" with the following observations on the influence of the English language in India.]*

My Lord and Gentlemen,—In the observations which your lordship was pleased to address to us, and which all listened to with great interest and attention, and if I may add for myself without impertinence, with very great admiration, you referred to the predominance of the English tongue. My Lord, nowhere is that predominance more marked than in my own country. The English language has been the means of uniting the varied races and religions, the peoples and complexities of our multiform civilisation in the golden chains of indissoluble union. It is our *Lingua Franca* and common means of communication, north, south, east and west. All are bound together by the common medium of the English language. Under the influence of the English language and English literature—and in this matter I am not guilty of the slightest exaggeration when I say that in India the dry bones of the valley have become instinct with life—English language and literature have brought about the most stupendous transformation in the lifetime of our generation. New ideas have taken possession of men's minds. New impulses have filled their hearts, and a new spirit is visible in the land. English language and English



literature have communicated the Promethean spark which has galvanised us into a new life. This is one of the most glorious achievements of the English race in the East. We had no newspapers before the establishment of British control. The first newspaper which was in India was published in 1817 and in Bengal. Thus in this, as in other matters, I am proud to say that my province has taken a lead. The Press has controlled the judgment, the conscience, the mind, and the religion of all India. Being of British origin it partakes of the virtues and of the defects of its parentage. Its heredity is marked on every phase of the situation. There is no quality for which the Britisher—and when I speak of the Britisher I include his kinsman over the seas—there is no quality for which the Britisher is more noted than the variety of his grumbling. He is a past master in the art, and therefore it is no wonder that that great authority, Sir William Hunter, has described the Native Press as “His Majesty’s Opposition, always in Opposition.” I dissent from that view completely. On the contrary, we are often proud to support the Government and accord to it a whole-hearted measure of support. And, my lord, if I may refer to a personal event I hope and trust that I may be excused. The whole of the Indian Press welcomed with enthusiasm and gratitude your lordship’s scheme of reform on behalf of India. For we felt it to be a distinctly genuine effort on the part of the Government to associate the democracy with the administration of India. We did not, indeed, get all that we want. For instance, we wanted the power of the purse, but we did not get it. At the same time, we believe that it was a notable advance in the process of evolution which is

'bound to give us a definite, effective, and real measure of self-government. We are not under any illusions. We knew perfectly well the limitations of the scheme. But the Government provided the machinery which would enable the Government to place itself in touch with popular opinion and would enable the representatives of the people to exercise an effective measure of indirect pressure on the Government and, therefore, we felt that it was a scheme which ought to be welcomed. We felt that if we were patient and persevering, we should, in time, get what we wanted and be admitted into the great confederacy of free states acknowledging England as their august mother. Here at any rate there was no opposition, but absolutely whole-hearted support. My lord, the Indian Press is the youngest branch of the Imperial Press and I claim for it that it is the promising scion of a noble stock. God grant that it may increase in power, in strength, and in usefulness and responsibility, to the great credit of ourselves and the glory of the great Empire to which we all have the honour to belong.

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## THE INDIAN PRESS.

*[At the meeting of the British and colonial journalists in the Imperial Press Conference in 1909 in London, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea made the following spirited defence in reply to Lord Cromer's attacks on the Indian Press :—]*

I am sorry to interpose with some observations which may not appear to be very pertinent to the question we are just considering ; but an invitation was extended to us—I will not use the word challenge—by Lord Cromer that we should say whether in our opinion the anarchical developments which have recently taken place in Bengal are due to the irresponsible utterances of a certain section of the Indian Press. Sir, to that query, to that question, my answer is an unqualified and an emphatic—“ No.” I will not defend what has been said in the Press. I say to my brother journalists gathered from all parts of the Empire—let me put this question to them. Are they prepared to defend everything in the Press—that is written in the Press—on questions of public importance ? Are we an infallible body ? Do we not commit great and gorgeous mistakes which we have reason to deplore to the end of our lives ? I am not here to defend the irresponsible utterances which unfortunately have found a place in some of the Indian newspapers. But, Sir, let me say this, that some of these newspapers form a very insignificant minority ; their circulation is limited ; their hold upon the people is circumscribed. Let me not for one moment be understood as standing up here in justification of these

anarchical developments. I express the sense of my province, of the better mind of Bengal and of India, when I say that we deplore these anarchical developments ; we have condemned them in our columns with all the emphasis we can command. They are in entire conflict with those deep-seated religious convictions which consciously or unconsciously govern our everyday lives. And without offence may I be permitted to say that anarchy is not of the East, but of the West ? It is a noxious growth which has been transplanted from the West to the East, and I hope and trust that under the salutary and ameliorating treatment of Lord Morley these anarchical developments will be utterly crushed out. (*Cheers*). Sir, I am precluded from entering into controversial matters, or else I should like to say a word or two with reference to those circumstances which have led to these anarchical developments. But I recognise the fact that this is a non-controversial Conference, and I resist the temptation I exercise, the self-control of the East in this matter. (*Laughter and cheers*). In conclusion, I desire to say this, that we regard the liberty of the Press as one of the greatest boons that have been conferred upon us under British rule. It was conferred on us not merely for political purposes but as an instrument for the dissemination of knowledge and of useful information. That was at any rate the conception of the great liberator of the Press, Lord Metcalfe, whose memory we cherish in our grateful recollections. Replying to a deputation which waited on him after the liberation of the Press, Lord Metcalfe said : " We are here not merely to collect taxes and to make good the deficit ; we are here for a higher and nobler purpose, and that is, to pour into the East the

knowledge, the culture, and the civilization of the West." (*Cheers*). That was the great aim, the great hope, the great aspiration of the liberator of the Press and that hope, that aspiration has been largely fulfilled. It is one of our greatest aims—I will claim this on behalf of my countrymen—that on the whole we have used it to the benefit of the Government, to the credit of our race ; and long may it be enjoyed to the mutual advantage of England and India, and to the glory of both countries. (*Cheers*).

## THE INDIANS' DINNER IN LONDON.

*[Mr. Banerjea was entertained at dinner by the Indian residents in London, at the Westminster Palace Hotel, in June, 1909. After the usual toasts were drunk, Mr. Banerjea said :—]*

There are moments in the lifetime of an individual when he may truly call himself happy. One of those moments has sounded for me now, when I find gathered together in this hall representatives of the culture, the civilisation, the wealth and the intellect of India, associated with you, Sir, to welcome me on my coming to this country. (*Cheers*). It is an index of the growing feeling of solidarity between the different races and peoples of India upon which the best prospects of Indian regeneration so largely depend. (*Cheers*). May this feeling grow and deepen to the lasting glory of the Motherland and the credit of English rule in India. (*Cheers*). To-day I find myself away from home, but yet in a second home surrounded by the loving kindness of friends who, like yourselves, have adopted me into the bosom of your little community. Your kindness and hospitality are worthy of the best traditions of our people, and they will be a stimulus and incentive to those who, like myself, seek to tread in the difficult, and, in these days, somewhat thorny and dangerous paths of public life in India. Next to the approbation of his own conscience, the highest reward to which a public man aspires is the applause of his fellow countrymen. (*Cheers*). This function to-day affords overwhelming evidence that I possess, may I say in unstinted

measure, your support of my public conduct. (*Cheers*). I am not so foolish as to imagine that that approbation extends to every item of my public life. I am not so foolish as to imagine that I, or anybody else, can claim to be infallible, for I recognise the truth that infallibility is the prerogative and monopoly of the Government—(*laughter*)—which possesses another gift of equal value—the knack of never confessing to a mistake or amending it, but regarding it as a settled fact. I do not claim from you a special certificate of approval covering the whole of my public life. I know that in respect of public matters there will always be differences of opinion. Uniformity in my judgment, and I think in the judgment of most public men, means stagnation. Rational differences of opinion conceived in a spirit of liberality, and expressed in the language of moderation, are the unerring indices of the growth of a healthy public life. Charity amid differences, self-restraint amid the most enthusiastic outbursts of patriotic fervour, regard for the law and the Constitution—in respect of which I think the Government might set an example by not enforcing a lawless law and deporting Indians without trial—and, above all, sacred concern for the Motherland and a firm and unflinching determination to spend and be spent in her service, these, in my judgment, constitute the principles of Indian public life as I understand them to-day. (*Cheers*).

You have asked me to discuss the problems of India—complicated and multiform problems, such as they present themselves to us to-day. I confess I find myself in a position of some little difficulty and embarrassment. A spectator sees more of the game than the actual players. I am not a spectator : I am in the thick

of the fight. (*Cheers*). I may claim to be in the front rank of battle surrounded by gifted self-sacrificing comrades in arms, some of whom, alas, have been deported without trial, and some of whom I would have liked to bring over to this country as samples of the race among whom a policy of repression has been introduced, and who in some quarters are considered unfit for self-government. It has often struck me that it would be a most useful thing—beneficial to England and to India alike—if we had in this country a Session of the Indian National Congress—(*hear, hear*)—and this impression has been accentuated by my experience in connection with the Imperial Press Conference. A Session of the Indian National Congress in London would be an object-lesson the significance of which it would be difficult to exaggerate. We have been declared to be unfit for self-government. Let us come face to face with the British public and let them see and decide whether the people of our great and ancient land are unfit for the inestimable boon. (*Cheers*).

Naturally enough, on an occasion like this, you wish for first hand information. We have suffered from sensational journalism: we have been the victims of grotesque exaggeration. I myself was declared to have been crowned King of India—(*Cheers and laughter*)—to have become a rival and competitor of his Gracious Majesty Edward VII, to whom we all owe honour and allegiance. A little incident took place the other day to which I desire to call the attention of this gathering. At Manchester a large number of my countrymen did me the honour of waiting upon me with a garland, which they presented to me. There was present on that occasion the representative of one of these sensational jour-



nals which shall be nameless—(*Name ! name ! and cries of "Daily Mail"*). I am not going to disclose the secrets of my prison-house. I approached him and I said : "This is what you once declared to be the 'crowning of Emperor Banerjea'." He denied the impeachment, and the matter ended. It seems to me it would be most desirable to organise a system by which cable reports could be sent to this country which would neither exaggerate nor extenuate, but simply tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. (*Hear, hear*). I appeal to my fellow countrymen and to our English sympathisers, to whom we are beholden for their very disinterested services, to interest themselves in forming an organisation of this kind in order to put an end to the mendacity of which we have in the past been innocent victims. (*Hear, hear*). I will not dwell further upon these considerations.

I will plunge into the subjects to which you have called my attention. You have referred to Lord Morley's scheme of reform. We welcomed it with gratitude and enthusiasm. But it is not correct to say that it outstripped our anticipations. In one respect at least it fell short of our hopes—of what, indeed, we had reason to expect. We wanted the power of the purse. (*Cheers*). It does not give us the power of the purse. You, Sir, have laid stress upon the financial drain from India. Yes, if the economic condition of India is to be raised, if the incessant outflow for Home Charges is to be stopped, if the raiyat is to be reclaimed from the depth of misery and poverty into which he has fallen, the people must be largely associated with their rulers in the financial control of India. Am I to understand that in the long and illustrious muster roll of distinguish-

ed Indians we have not at the present moment fit successors to Todar Mall and Bir Bal and Salar Jung and Madhava Rao ? (*Cheers*). If an admission to that effect is to be made it implies a monstrous reflection on British rule. It means that after two centuries under the most civilised administration on earth, the Indian people have become so demoralised, so emasculated, so utterly wanting in intellectual power and virility, that they are not able to come up to the standard of their fathers. I will not myself make such a charge. I will not permit anyone in this room to make such an outrageous charge against the civilised administration which presides over the destinies of our country. We have the men, but our rulers will not look at them : they will not select them : they will not trust them. That is the charge which I wish to bring against the Government : not that it has demoralised us or rendered us a race of imbeciles, but that it is so absorbed in the pursuit of interests peculiar to itself that it will not take a broad view of the situation and associate the people in the task of administration. If it could do that, if it could rise to the height of its responsibilities, a distinct step would be taken for the economic improvement of the condition of our people.

But I have been straying very far from the point I was discussing. Under Lord Morley's scheme of reform we have not got all we wanted. But still it is right and proper that we should do justice, and, therefore, we are bound to admit that the scheme represents a distinct advance upon the existing methods of administration, and that in its culmination it will give us a real and effective measure of self-government. There is growth in all institutions. No Government can enact a

measure—be it good, or be it bad—which is not at once subjected to a process of transformation, slow but steady, under the operation of those immutable moral laws which form a part of the eternal order of things. Forces gather around it which give it an impulse and direction that often lead to great and unexpected results. What a vast difference there is between the Parliament of Simon de Montfort and the great assembly which now controls the destinies of so vast a section of the human race. There is a growth in all things, and we believe there will be a growth in connection with the institutions which Lord Morley is going to establish. We therefore accept them as a beginning pregnant with immense potentialities. (*Cheers*). In that spirit and in that sense we welcome the scheme with enthusiasm and with gratitude. (*Hear, hear*). That is the position of educated Bengal—I may say of educated India—with regard to Lord Morley's reforms. But there is a rift in the lute. The enthusiasm—the tremendous outburst of enthusiasm—which the scheme evoked has been chilled by an unhappy pronouncement made by Lord Morley—a pronouncement to the effect that he will be no party to the reversal of the partition of Bengal. You, Sir, did not honour Bengal in your address by the mention of her great fundamental grievance. The partition is our greatest grievance, and it is the root-cause of the prevailing discontent. (*Hear, hear*). Of Lord Morley I desire to speak with the utmost possible respect, and I think my feelings are shared by a large body of my fellow-countrymen.

We have sat at his feet—I have done so, at any rate—and we have gathered from him lessons of political wisdom. When Lord Morley says that he will be no

party to the reversal of the partition of Bengal, I venture to hope that that pronouncement does not preclude him from considering proposals, not perhaps for the reversal, but for the modification of the partition. I venture to hope that the illustrious author of the "Compromise" will apply that policy to the great grievance of Bengal. If anybody were to tell me that there was no hope for a modification of the partition, I would tell him in reply that there was no hope for the conciliation of Bengal. The co-operation of the people in the working of the Reform scheme is essential. Is it possible to ensure the success of any administrative measure, however hopeful or promising it may be, without the willing concurrence and the hearty co-operation of the people concerned? We have only to look to the dead failure of the Calcutta Municipal Act for an illustration of that. (*Cheers*). My friend Mr. Cotton over there cheers that statement. He knows something about the Calcutta Municipal Act. In 1899, under Lord Curzon's administration, the Corporation of Calcutta—an institution of local self-government—was officialised. The proportion of elected members was reduced from two-thirds to one-half. We prayed and begged and entreated, and exhausted all the resources of constitutional agitation. But it was all in vain. Lord Curzon had made up his mind, and there was nobody to bring him to book, and, as a final protest against the officialisation of the Corporation, 28 Commissioners, including your humble servant, tendered their resignations. The people took their cue from us, and stood aloof from the administration. They displayed towards it the greater distrust. What has been the result? Despite the most strenuous official whiter-

washing—and Indian officials are past masters in that art—I exclude ex-officials, of course—*(a laugh)*—despite the most strenuous official white-washing, we find that the Calcutta Municipality has been pronounced to be a failure, and the Decentralisation Commission has recommended a revision of its constitution on the lines of that of the Bombay Corporation. *(Cheers.)* Lord Morley has declared the partition of Bengal to be a settled fact, but this statement is coupled with an admission which makes it absolutely untenable, for Lord Morley says that there were errors in the original scheme, but that on the whole it was as good a scheme as could have been conceived. And he added that it was a mere question of boundaries.

If these things are admitted, then, why should the partition be regarded as a settled fact? *(Hear, hear)*. Is it logical in the face of these admissions to consider the partition a settled fact? Statesmen, I know, are not bound to be logical, but they are, at any rate, bound to be just and reasonable, and they ought not to override paramount claims. If it is admitted there were errors in the original plan of partition is it fair to perpetuate them in the permanent administration—an arrangement affecting the happiness of millions of people—is it fair to stereotype a blunder which must be disastrous to the credit of the administration? I can think of nothing more calculated to shock popular confidence in the integrity and sense of fairness of the British Government than for it to say, “We have committed a blunder, but refuse to redress it.” That is the dictum of absolute and autocratic power and not the reasoned judgment of responsible statesmanship. *(Hear, hear)*. But I will say this: From the point of view of the

administrator, although not from the point of view of the sentimentalist and of the philosopher, the partition has been a great blunder ; it is the root-cause of the present discontent. (*Cheers*). Here, fortunately, I am supported indirectly by valuable official testimony. Of course there is no direct official testimony. Officials never do confess to a mistake. But there is a body of corroborative evidence, the value of which Mr. Mackarness—(*cheers*)—will recognise. You will remember the case of the Alipur Bomb prisoners. They were charged with conspiring against His Majesty the King-Emperor. The date in the indictment is fixed at or about October 16, 1905. I ask you to bear that date in mind. It is very important. (*Hear, hear*). October 16, 1905, was the date of the partition of Bengal, and therefore we have in this official statement, which is part of a pure judicial proceeding submitted on the responsibility of the Crown—a suggestion to the effect that the partition was the *fons et origo* of all the discontent and troubles that have followed. Furthermore, the partition has brought 'about, I am sorry to say, a strong alienation of feeling between Hindus and Mahomedans in some parts of the country leading to riots, disturbances, and breaches of the peace. The policy of dividing Bengal may be acceptable to a few, but it is the instrument of the weak. It is a prolific source of embarrassment. We in Bengal cannot accept the partition as a settled fact. (*Hear, hear*). We decline to do so. (*Cheers*). And appeal to you here to sympathise with us in the great struggle in which we are now engaged. I tell you that that struggle will continue so long as the partition is not modified. The agitation will continue, the excitement will grow, the tension will increase

and I ask you, is all this conducive to good government ? Let the Government pause and consider. Our responsibility is over. The responsibility now must rest upon our rulers and administrators. We have raised our warning voice.

I will not trouble you further with this question of the partition. I am afraid I have already taken too much time with that. (*Cries of "No."*) You have referred to the imprisonment of the editors. Do you know as a little historical fact that I was one of the first Indian editors to be imprisoned ? I am in the deepest sympathy with my comrades in distress—I think it is monstrous that punishments of the magnitude of those which have been imposed should have been inflicted upon them. I hope and trust that a general order of amnesty will soon be issued, and that these men will be released. I fear that the official authorities lose their balance of mind when they come to deal with cases of this kind. It is natural, perhaps, for them to be panic-stricken, and I sympathise with them to a certain extent ; but at the same time I believe they ought to be above all such distemper of mind. (*Cheers*). Reference has been made to the domiciliary visits which have become so frequent of late. I have personally enquired into this matter, and I am prepared with some first-hand information with regard to it. The news I have at the present moment is about two weeks old. Two hundred young men are treated as suspects, their houses are visited night after night by the police. I think it is a great shame. (*Cheers*). No charges have been made against them ; they certainly have not been convicted of any. It is upon the secret reports of a secret police—the most unscrupulous in the world—that these young

men have been subjected to the degradation and annoyance of police surveillance. The secret police in India are the most unscrupulous in the world. I think they might give points to the Russian police in their amazing facility of fabricating evidence. (*Hear, hear*). I think that public opinion in this country ought to be brought to bear on this matter. (*Cheers*). I would appeal to our English friends hear to interest themselves in it, and to try to put an end to a scandal which is deepening the discontent in the new province. (*Hear, hear*).

I pass now to the question of the deportations. Speaking as an Indian, it would be impossible for me to allude to this question without expressing our deep gratitude—the deep gratitude of all Indians—to Mr. Mackarness and his colleagues, including Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Keir Hardie, and, last but not least, that devoted worker for the cause of India Dr. Rutherford,—(*cheers*)—for the action they have taken in the House of Commons on this question. It is impossible for me to exhaust the list of gentlemen who have thus assisted us, but their services will remain enshrined in the grateful recollection of my countrymen, and they will be remembered as the friends who stood by us in the hour of darkest need. (*Cheers*). It has been sought to justify these deportations, and that by no less an authority than the Prime Minister himself, on the ground that they have contributed to abate the elements of mischief which were in full operation at the time the deportations took place. I respectfully but most emphatically dissent from this view—(*cheers*)—and I am about to submit for your consideration certain facts which I think will bear out my contention. These deportations took place on December 11, 1908—I think it was a Friday.



Since then there have been three cases of bomb throwing at passing trains, and since then too, my esteemed and dearly beloved friend Babu Ashutosh Biswas, the Public Prosecutor of Alipur, has been murdered within the precincts of the Court. How, then, is the Prime Minister justified in saying that these elements of mischief have been abated and that ~~that~~ result has been brought about by the deportations? To connect the bomb-throwing, even by implication, with some of the men deported constitutes in my judgment a foul libel on them. (*Loud cheers*). Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra and Babu Aswini Kumar Dutt and many others are men of whom, in my opinion, we may well be proud. (*Cheers*). Religious, God-fearing, scrupulously honest and scrupulously constitutional in their methods of public work, their deportation has created a sense of profound sorrow and indignation throughout the length and breadth not only of Bengal but of India. It is remarkable that in the discussions and controversies which have raged round this question not a single word has been said about the success or otherwise of similar measures that were taken in 1907 in the Punjab. Why this silence? It is very significant, and in my opinion it involves a confession of the failure of deportation as an instrument for the suppression of crime. The Punjab has been pacified. Was it due to the deportations or even to the prolonged agony of the Rawalpindi trial? My answer is an emphatic "No." It was the vetoing of the Colonisation Bill by Lord Minto—(*cheers*)—which brought back peace and tranquillity to that distracted province. Let the same policy be adopted in Bengal and the same results will follow. Let the partition be modified, and there will be such an outburst of enthusiasm as will

wipe out the recollection of bitter memories of the past (*Hear, hear*).

It has been said again, in justification of these deportations, that there was terrorism in India, that it was difficult to procure evidence, and that the ordinary process of law had proved inadequate. Terrorism by whom? Was it by the people or by the police? Was it terrorism by the people or by the magistracy? I say the terrorism was by the police and by the magistracy, and Chief Justice Jenkins shall be my witness. (*Cheers*). In the notorious Midnapur case information was given against 154 persons as having entered into a plot for murdering British officials in the Midnapur district. Thirty persons were arrested, including the Raja of Narajole, who had a great stake in the country, and to whom the Government itself had done honour by conferring on him titular distinction. Thirty persons, including the Raja, were condemned to solitary confinement in cells reserved for convicts and murderers. (*Shame*). This went on for six months. There was a tremendous out-cry, and the Press expressed itself in language of warmest condemnation and indignation. The Advocate-General, Mr. Sinha, now Law Member of the Viceroy's Council, who is worthy of all honour—(*cheers*)—was deputed by the Government of Bengal to investigate this matter, and having gone through the papers he recommended that 27 out of the 30 prisoners should be discharged. They were accordingly released. The three others were sent for trial; their case came before the Sessions Judge, and they were convicted as a matter of course—(*laughter*)—and sentenced to transportation for long terms. An appeal was filed. Chief Justice Jenkins and Mr. Justice Mookerjee heard it, and they delivered a scathing

judgment condemning the tactics of the police and the magistracy alike. In that judgment Chief Justice Jenkins said that Mr. Weston, the Magistrate of Midnapur, who was in charge of the prosecution, caused the arrest of the father of one of the prisoners with a view to obtain, to extract, to extort—whichever term you please,—a confession from the son. (*Cries of "Shame"*). I think it is a matter of unutterable shame.

Let us pass from the magistrates to the police. The Chief Justice says the Court accepts the theory of the defence that a bomb had been put into the house of one of the accused by the police with a view to fabricating evidence! Gentlemen, I put it to you to say whether this is terrorism by the people or terrorism by the police and the magistracy. (*Cheers.*) Then we were told that the ordinary processes of law had proved inadequate. I was under the impression that the Executive had been strengthened, and that enormous powers had been given to it by special legislation. Are we to understand that that special legislation was of no use, so that it had to be supplemented by powers of deportation? Never was there a confession of more hopeless failure. (*Loud cheers.*) Where in the history of the world has repression ever been successful? It paralyses healthy and useful activity; its arm is never long enough to reach the secret dens of secret societies which are fostered and brought into being by repressive methods.

Personal liberty is the indefeasible right of British subjects, no matter in what part of the world they may be born. In the days of negro slavery the shackles of the negro burst from around him the moment he touched the consecrated soil of Britain. Are we to under-

stand—I am talking as a Native of India—that these golden traditions have been forgotten or that they are to be held to be inapplicable to the Indian subjects of His Majesty? To us these deportations have been a matter of the deepest disappointment. We had regarded the Liberal Party as the guardians of popular freedom and as the champions of Indian popular rights. (*Cheers.*) But when we see it enforcing against us antiquated and obsolete enactments of this kind, deporting our best men without trial, the shock communicated to our feelings has an intensity which it is impossible for me to describe. (*Cheers.*) But that is the position of affairs. It is for us, my Indian friends, to face it with firmness and at the same time with moderation and self-restraint—to keep in check the elements of lawlessness and to adhere with scrupulous fidelity to constitutional methods of agitation. We have worked hard up till now with inadequate results. The journey may seem long and wearisome: the promised land may appear to be distant, but uplifted by hope and by faith—an undying faith in the high destinies of our country—let us fight the good fight, and I am confident that the God of all nations will vouchsafe us the victory—that victory which awaits those who, inspired by sublime confidence in His dispensation and in the paramountcy of the moral laws, seek to work out the regeneration of the country in a spirit of peace, of righteousness, and absolute self-consecration. I will say no more. I thank you most heartily for the kind attention with which you have listened to what I have said. I hope and trust that in the future that is before us united brotherhood, enthusiasm, public spirit and self-dedication may be the

watchwords of the great Indian people ; that the country will be restored to the glories of ancient times, and that once again it will become one of the greatest nations in the world. In that hope, in that belief and conviction let us work, and success will attend our efforts. (*Loud and long continued cheering.*)

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## THE SITUATION IN INDIA.

[*At a meeting held at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, in July 18, 1909, Sir Charles Dilke, Bart., M. P., presiding, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea said :*]

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I desire at the outset to associate myself, and I can also speak on behalf of my countrymen, with the observations which you, Mr. Chairman, have been pleased to make regarding the blessed and time-honoured memory of the late Marquis of Ripon. (*Hear, hear.*) In the illustrious muster-roll of Indian Viceroys he will take his place amongst the most illustrious. His memory will for ever remain enshrined in the grateful recollections of our people. The rulers of India who cling together in our grateful affections are Bentinck, Canning, and Ripon. (*Cheers.*) I do not think it necessary to repeat the observations which I have made at other public meetings to express the horror and detestation which we have felt at the terrible tragedy which resulted in the deaths of Sir Curzon Wyllie and Dr. Lalcaca, for Indian public opinion in this country and in the homeland is clear and emphatic with regard to it. (*Hear, hear.*)

For various reasons, some of them not of the most pleasant character, the Indian problem at the present time looms largely into the public view. Our complaint—I mean the complaint of the people of India—is that so little interest is felt in this country regarding the affairs of that great dependency. (*Hear, hear.*) The apathy of the British public is one of our greatest

grievances, because the fact remains, whoever might be our governors and administrators, the British democracy, the electors of Great Britain and Ireland, are the real rulers of India. (*Hear, hear.*) To them have been entrusted the destinies of 300,000,000 of my fellow-countrymen, not savages or barbarians, but representatives of a great and ancient culture which carries the mind back to the dawn of human history. (*Hear, hear.*) How is this awful responsibility discharged? I am reminded in this connection of an Eastern legend, historical in its character and based upon truth. Mahmoud of Ghazni flourished in the eleventh century of the Christian era. His dominions extended far and wide. There lived in a part of his Empire an elderly woman who had suffered a grievous wrong, for one night she found her house burned down, her goods plundered, and her children massacred. Overwhelmed with the awful calamity, she set out to the capital of the Empire and sought her ruler's presence. She presented herself at the palace gates, was ushered into Mahmoud's presence, and laid her complaint before him. Mahmoud heard her case and its tale of sorrow and wrong, and then he remarked: "Woman, you live in a remote part of my Empire. How can you expect me to extend to you the protection of my power?" And the woman, with that promptitude of resource which characterises her sex—(*laughter*)—replied: "Sire, why then do you conquer countries to whose affairs you cannot pay sufficient attention, and for which you cannot hold yourself answerable at the Day of Judgment?" (*Applause.*)

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have no desire to enforce this lesson in its application to the British democracy,

but I say this, and I think with your full concurrence, that the responsibility of these islands as regards their gret dependency is not discharged by merely appointing your governors and your administrators and leaving them to the discretion of their own sweet wills. (*Hear, hear.*) I have no desire to make the smallest reflection upon the men on the spot. (*Hear, hear and laughter.*) I am sure they do their best according to their lights and opportunities ; but after all, they are human beings, dominated with ideas and sentiments, and it may be with the passion of their prejudices. In the old days of the East India Company a Parliamentary Committee used to be appointed every twenty years to enquire into Indian affairs. The labours of this Committee were favourable alike to England and to India, and I do not understand why this practice should not be revived and the Government thereby exercise a beneficent sway over the people, caring for them and in turn being loved by them. There is nothing to lose but everything to gain by such an enquiry. (*Hear, hear.*) But Governments are slow to move. They will not prepare the materials or provide the grant for impelling progress without the irresistible pressure of public opinion being brought to bear upon them. (*Hear, hear.*) Yet this is what will have to be done. (*Hear, hear.*) I have heard it said that if such an enquiry were to take place the machinery of the Government would be dislocated. Well, all I can say is, I have a far greater faith in the stability of that machinery than apparently have those who work it and are responsible for its efficiency. (*Hear, hear and laughter.*) And this is justified by the lessons of experience. Only eighteen months ago the Decentralisation Committee was appointed to visit India



and travel up and down the country, examining numerous witnesses and instituting the most searching investigation.

Ladies and gentlemen, will you believe it, the Government of India actually survived the catastrophe. (*Laughter.*) No dislocation nor any disturbance of the existing machinery of the Government took place. There was not the slightest deviation from the normal conditions of the administration of the Government, nor was there any deviation in the uses of Indian life and society. My own belief is that if this Committee were continued and their recommendations followed, the Government of to-day would not have been confronted with excitement and unrest and all the deplorable things which have followed in their train. (*Hear, hear.*) The Government would have been more in touch with the people. And that brings me to the subject of Indian unrest. What is the cause of that unrest, what are the circumstances contributing to it, and what is the solution of the problem? (*Hear, hear.*) Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to bear in mind that we in India are a law-abiding and peaceful people. (*Hear, hear.*) Our instincts, traditions, and deepest religious feelings and affections are intimately bound up in the maintenance of law and order. Our ancestors developed a system of ethics and a code of laws upon that proclamation from on high, "Peace and good will among men," which to-day excite the admiration of mankind and constitute an enduring monument of their devotion to peace. What, then, is it that has plunged a people whose antecedents were such as I have described, so peacefully inclined, so adverse to all forms of excitement, into a vortex of unrest which is unparalleled? Edmund Burke has told

us—and his dictum has never been challenged, for the reason that it cannot be challenged—that in all controversies between people and their rulers the presumption is that the rulers are in the wrong and the people in the right. (*Hear, hear*). I say if the matter of this Indian unrest were carefully examined, and there is no tribunal more qualified for the task than the tribunal of the British public, it would be found that the responsibility for this unrest mainly rests, and I am sorry to have to say it, but say it I must, upon the Government of the country. (*Hear, hear*.)

I blame no one ; I am not here to formulate charges against individuals. Even the most dazzling and brilliant of Viceroys fade out of my recollection before the issues involved. I am here to place the facts before you as they affect my countrymen and to vindicate their character as a peaceful and law-abiding people. (*Hear, hear*.) When you have heard those facts I know you will give your verdict in my favour. (*Applause*). I am happy to say from the outset England's great mission in the East was realized by the illustrious founders of the Indian Empire. It was not realized by every one, and certainly not by those who went out to India to make money or die of liver complaint—(*laughter*)—but it was realized by those great and illustrious men whose genius and statesmanship founded the vast and majestic fabric of the Empire of India. Macaulay, speaking from his place in the House of Commons on the occasion of the Charter Act, used language which I for one have ever read with enthusiasm and gratitude. "It may be," said Macaulay, "that the public mind in India may so expand under our system that it may outgrow that system, and our

subjects trained in Western civilization may pray for Western institutions. ' I know not whether such a day will come, but if it does come it will be the proudest day in the annals of England.' I venture to say that that day has arrived, and great are the responsibilities of England. (*Hear, hear and applause.*) Lord Metcalfe the liberator of the Indian Press, used similar language when replying to a deputation which waited upon him. "We are not here," he said, "merely to keep the peace and collect taxes...we are here for a higher and nobler purpose, to pour into the East the knowledge and culture and the civilization of the West." (*Hear, hear.*) The Earl of Selburne, the great-grandfather of Lord Lansdowne, who opposed the insertion of Clause 3 into the Indian Councils Bill, said on the occasion of the debate in the House of Lords on the Charter Act of 1833 that their lordships would be remiss in the discharge of their duties if they did not offer to the Indian people ample opportunity for developing the high moral and intellectual qualities with which they had been endowed. These utterances embodied a noble policy, and such a policy pressed steadily into the view of the Indian Government by the most illustrious of Indian administrators has resulted in higher education being introduced into our midst, the Press liberated, local self-government, and the setting up of councils. But can you tell a people whom you have so liberally educated and plentifully supplied with the environments which stimulate public life that thus far shall they go and no further. (*Hear, hear.*) Yet that has represented the attitude of Anglo-Indian government for the past twenty years.

There you have the beginning of Indian unrest, which

has now assumed such vast proportions. Can we overlook the wondrous change which has taken place in Asia ; changes have been brought about by the victories of Japan over Russia, which had strengthened the confidence of Asiatics in themselves. (*Hear, hear.*) We have a mighty wave sweeping over Asia which carries with it high ideals and aspirations. India would be false to herself, her ancient culture which she so largely imbibed, and the education she has received if she did not feel revived in the example of oriental nations struggling for consideration and self-government. (*Hear, hear.*) On the top of all this excitement came a period of reaction, in which the legitimate aspirations of the people were ignored and trifled with. The people were counted as nothing, we were counted as nothing, and we were to do nothing ; everything was to be done for us. The generous policy of Lord Ripon was reversed. Local self-government was modified, and the universities, centres of humane and beneficent influence, were officialised, despite the protests of the people. Then on the top of all came the crowning piece of folly—the partition of Bengal. (*Hear, hear.*)

It is true the situation has been somewhat eased by Lord Morley's reform, but this reform scheme has given rise to some considerable diversity of opinion amongst us. (*Hear, hear.*) There are those representing a section of Indian opinion who hold that it lacks the essential element of genuine reform ; that it will serve no useful purpose, and that whatever merits it might have possessed have disappeared in the recommendation of a system of class legislation. (*Hear, hear.*) On the other hand, there are those who hold a different view altogether. They declare that the scheme makes

lavish concessions—concessions which were never before thought of, and which represent an entirely new and remarkable departure. As an Indian speaking on behalf of my countrymen, I say at once that I totally dissent from this view. The scheme contains no concessions which have not been sought for. So far from the scheme being lavish, I still say that it does not come up to our expectations in regard to many matters which vitally concern the power of the purse. We want definite control at least over some of the great departments of the State ; over sanitation, education, and the public works department. Are you not aware that hundreds of thousands of my countrymen die every year from preventible diseases, such as malaria and cholera ? (*Shameful !*) Yes, I think it is very shameful indeed. We have been pressing the importance of the matter upon the Government for years. We have cried aloud, but who will listen to us ? (*Hear, hear.*) If we had some effective control over finance, or at least over sanitary measures to be employed, I am convinced that we could prevent to some extent the appalling rate of mortality which desolates homes in Bengal. (*Hear, hear.*) The expenditure on education is inadequate. The great bulk of it is not being spent for education at all but upon inspection. (*Laughter.*) As for elementary education, well, the less said the better. (*Hear, hear.*) If we had any control over finances in regard to education we should devote the money to a useful and profitable purpose. We want the power of the purse and a definite and effective method of self-government. (*Cheers.*) This we have not got ; all the scheme does is—and let me be perfectly candid in the matter—to provide machinery by which representatives

of the people would be in a position to bring to bear upon the Government not a direct influence but an indirect moral pressure. (*Hear, hear.*)

At the same time we have accepted the scheme as a beginning. We recognise that there is such a thing as the growth of public institutions. (*Hear, hear.*) You cannot make a law, be it good or bad, which is not at once subject to a process of transformation under the operation of immutable moral laws. These are hopes which have gathered round the scheme. They may be fulfilled, or dark clouds may gather, the force of reaction may be in the ascendant so that these aspirations which we have fondly cherished may fall away like shadows. All the same, we do cherish these hopes, and we pray that they may be realised. (*Hear, hear.*) In Bengal the situation has taken a somewhat strained and difficult aspect. In the firmament of that province there is a cloud which is no bigger than a man's hand, but which threatens to overshadow the beautiful prospect pointed out by Lord Morley's scheme. Lord Morley has recently said that he will be no party to the withdrawal of the partition of Bengal. I hope that that pronouncement does not preclude him from considering proposals for the modification of the partition. (*Hear, hear.*) If any one were to tell me, no matter how high and exalted might be his position, that there is no hope for the modification of the partition of Bengal, I should venture to tell him, in the name of my countrymen, that then there is no hope for the conciliation of Bengal, or for the co-operation of our people in the working of the reform scheme. (*Applause.*) This partition is our greatest grievance, and in our judgment it is the root cause of the present discontent in India. (*Hear, hear.*) When it was

first announced it invoked the united opposition of the Hindus and the Mahomedans alike. The opposition was so wide-spread and so intense that it would have sealed the fate of any measure in this country. But the methods of the Government in India are different from the methods of the Government in England. (*Hear, hear.*) For this opposition the Indian Government had its revenge. A wider scheme of partition was announced, which had been deliberated on in the secret recesses of the Secretarial Bureau. It was resolved upon in secret and fell like a bolt from the blue upon the astonished people of India. It gave rise to an agitation the parallel of which I have never before witnessed. (*Hear, hear.*) It is four years since the partition was accomplished, but the wound to-day is as fresh as if it were only inflicted yesterday. (*Hear, hear.*) There are those who say that the feeling against the partition is on the wane, but we are in the position of unfortunate beings suffering from a painful disease. It has its moments of cessation, but the patient knows no rest or peace so long as the root cause of the disease lies ingrained in his system. The anniversary of the date of the partition is a day of mourning. The shops are closed, and all business is suspended. The people go about the streets bare-footed, interchanging amongst themselves the mystic ribbon of eternal love, and the vow to carry on the agitation from generation to generation until the partition has been abolished.

I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, is it right to allow a grievance of this kind to fester in the depths of a national life? The longer you permit it the wider becomes its mischievous operation and the deeper grows the discontent. (*Hear, hear.*) They say it is a sentimental

grievance. Be it so. A sentimental grievance is one which is worthy of consideration. What I should like to know would be the feelings of the people of England, under the identical circumstances. But far more so is the question of sentimental feeling important when it is a question of governing an Oriental nation. (*Hear, hear.*)

But, ladies and gentlemen, this grievance is more than a sentimental grievance, and I desire to lay before you some of the most practical considerations which ought to operate for a modification of this partition. The partition was entered into in the name of efficiency. No finance, I venture to hope, is a crucial test for efficient administration. (*Hear, hear.*) What, however, do you find with regard to Bengal? It is a bankrupt province, unable to meet its demands, and compelled to rely upon subsidies from the Government of India in order to supply its most urgent needs. (*Hear, hear.*) If Bengal remained united she would have been financially prosperous, and financial prosperity means prosperity all round. (*Hear, hear.*) Let me take another consideration, and not a sentimental consideration. For generations the Hindus and Mahomedans have lived together in peace, but the partition has thrown the apple of discord into their midst, and has created an alienation of feeling which has led to great disturbances and breaches of the peace. Lord Ripon, of blessed memory, strongly condemned the partition on the ground that it had caused deep discontent among the population—meaning the population of which I have the honour to belong. Contentment of the people is the strongest asset of the British Government. Great Queen Victoria taught us the utmost importance of this



in the Proclamation of 1858, which she closed with these words : " In the contentment of our people lies the strength of our rule. " (*Hear, hear.*) It is useless for me to disguise the fact that universal contentment in Bengal has become a thing of the past. Any one who knows Bengal will tell you that it is a province of peaceful people. Why, then, is it now the centre of disaffection and discontent ? It is the partition. (*Hear, hear.*) I have, ladies and gentlemen, the confirmation of official testimony. You will remember that the persons in the Alipore bomb case were charged with conspiring against His Majesty, and it was stated that the day fixed upon was October 16. That date is important because it happens to be the date of the partition of Bengal. (*Hear, hear.*)

I think, therefore, the partition stands confounded from the mouths of those who support it. What does Lord Morley say ? I desire to speak of him with the utmost respect ; I have read his works again and again, and I teach them to my scholars and saturate their minds with lofty principles of political wisdom. (*Hear, hear.*) But if I respect Lord Morley, I love my motherland far more. (*Hear, hear and applause.*) Therefore, in the interest of my native land, I must enter into the arena and contend against my political guru. Lord Morley says it is merely a matter of the adjustment of boundaries, and yet he also says that the partition is a settled fact. (*Hear, hear.*) A statesman need not be logical, but he is bound to be reasonable and just, and cannot override the paramount claims of the people. Righteousness is the vital breath of Imperial statesmanship, and a single act of unrighteousness is more disastrous to British rule in India than a great reverse

sustained upon an Asiatic battlefield. (*Hear, hear.*) I cannot conceive anything more disastrous to the credit of the British administration than such a proceeding as the partition. It is calculated to shake Indian confidence in the integrity and sense of fairness of the Government. (*Hear, hear.*) Lord Morley says the partition is a settled fact. Then I say on behalf of my fellow-countrymen that we decline to accept it as a settled fact. We decline to accept what is admittedly a blunder and what we feel to be a cruel law and a wrong to the sentiment of the people. (*Applause.*) We will continue this agitation, and we want your sympathy in our great struggle. (*Hear, hear.*) Will you extend to us the right hand of friendship and sympathy in this matter? (*Cheers.*) That this is a deplorable blunder has become obvious by the supplement of a policy of oppression which has become necessary to combat the feeling which has been evoked. Take away this partition and then the oppressive policy will become unnecessary.

So far as this policy of repression is concerned I say this, it came to us in the light of an unpleasant surprise. We are accustomed to associate English administration, especially control by the Imperial Government, with the most scrupulous observance of the rights of personal property. Your history and literature and poetry are saturated with the rights of personal liberty. (*Hear, hear.*) No one could read the glowing pages of English history without imbibing a passionate love for such liberty; yet it would seem that we are not to be allowed to enjoy it. By secret reports of a secret police the sanctity of our homes is invaded, domiciliary visits are made, and nine gentlemen, some of them men of light and leading, are

wrested away from the bosom of their families and held in detention in gaol under personal discipline, without the purpose being communicated to them, any explanation given or a chance given of making a defence. ("Shame".) And what is the character of these police? The most unscrupulous in the world. (*Hear, hear.*) Sir Lawrence Jenkins, the Chief Justice of Bengal, in the Court of Appeal, found that the police had deliberately put a bomb in the house of the accused with a view of fabricating evidence, and Mr. Weston, Magistrate of Midnapur, caused the arrest of the father of one of the accused with a view of extorting a confession. ("Shame!") It is a shame, and it is a matter of bitter irony that these things should be done under a Government presided over by a Secretary of State of the pronounced liberalism of Lord Morley. (*Hear, hear.*) "Liberalism," said Mr. Gladstone, "was trust in the people, tempered with discretion." Such proceedings as this, however, involve the gravest distrust of the people, and if you will not trust the people they will not trust you.

"Coercion is an evil instrument of Government," said Edmund Burke in the eighteenth century, and so said John Morley in the nineteenth! It exasperates and does not salve, but leaves wounds which take years of conciliatory administration to heal. How did you pacify India after the Mutiny? You did so by the rejection of all coercive measures and by the application of conciliatory methods. (*Hear, hear.*) With all the emphasis I can command, in the name of common sense, on behalf of the people of India and the credit of British rule, I do earnestly appeal to you to do all that lies in your power to bring about a speedy abrogation of this oppressive partition, which sits like a nightmare upon

the troubled bosoms of our people ; and might I also be permitted to make another appeal to you, not to accept the official version that the feeling against the partition is on the wane. (*Hear; hear.*) The patient himself is the best judge of the painfulness of his malady, and we are the patients in this instance. (*Hear, hear.*) My countrymen are suffering, and in their name and upon their behalf I urge you to do all in your power to bring about a modification of the partition of Bengal. I am sure my appeal will not fall upon heedless ears, but will go forth from this meeting accompanied by a volume of sympathy which will have the effect of redressing our grievance and restoring many millions of my countrymen to contentment. (*Applause.*)

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# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PRESS.



## LORD MORLEY'S REFORM PROPOSALS.\*

I regard the new scheme as the beginning of Parliamentary institutions in regard to local administration. I don't think we have got all that we wanted, but we are thankful for what we have got and we shall continue to press far more in a thoroughly constitutional way.

We asked for definite and effective control over the finances and the Executive Government : I cannot say that we have got either. But we have obtained substantial concessions which will prepare the way for these great ends.

With reference to the financial question, the situation is less satisfactory. Members will be permitted to move amendments in Committee, but the Government is under no obligation to accept these amendments, and the functions of the members will therefore be more or less advisory.

There is a general feeling of disappointment that nothing is said about Partition.

We fervently hope that as the Government has embarked upon a policy of conciliation it will accomplish its work by re-uniting the two Bengals under a Presidency Governor, for which the Secretary of State proposes to take powers. I feel that the modification of the Partition and the raising of the two Bengals to the status of a Presidency Government should be the essential feature of the policy of conciliation.

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\* Contributed to the *Indian Review*, December, 1908.

## WHAT INDIA WANTS.

### AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. STEAD.

I travelled down to Lord Northcliffe's seat at Sutton with Mr. Banerjea when the editors of the *Empire* went down to lunch at that delightful place, and formed the highest opinion of his lucid intelligence, his marvellous command of English, and his passionate devotion to his native land. I had the honour of being one of the guests at the banquet given to him by his fellow-countrymen in England at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and was delighted to find in him an orator of brilliant eloquence and a statesman of comprehensive outlook, with a most practical mind. I invited him to my house and there in company with a dozen friends—American, Canadian, Irish and Indian—Mr. Banerjea kindly submitted himself to a process of composite interviewing the gist of which the readers will find condensed in this article. Mr. Banerjea has been twice President of the Indian National Congress, he has been once in gaol, he is the editor of the *Bengalee*, and his repute is such that he was once said to have been crowned king of Bengal as a protest against the partition. He was the only representative of the Native Indian Press at the Conference, and none of the editors of the *Empire* excelled him in eloquence, energy, geniality, and personal charm.

### MESSAGE TO BRITISH PUBLIC.

"If you were under sentence of death Mr. Banerjea, and the headman's axe was to fall in two minutes, what

is the message which you would wish to address to the British public as the last words you were able to utter on behalf of your motherland ?”

Without a moment's hesitation Mr. Banerjea replied :—

“I would say this : (1) Modify the partition of Bengal ; (2) release the deported patriots and repeal the Act which annuls *Habeas Corpus* in Bengal ; (3) amnesty to all the political prisoners ; (4) give the people of India financial control of their own taxes ; and (5) grant India a constitution on the Canadian model. That is what I would say, and having said that, I would go to my doom.”

“Good !” said I. “Now let us condescend to particulars. I thought you wanted the repeal of the partition ?”

#### PARTITION.

“I wish that repeal were possible, but I recognise that Lord Morley, having been perhaps challenged prematurely for an expression of opinion, took up a stand from which he can hardly now be asked to recede. I am a practical man ; I ask for modification, not for repeal.” “But I suppose you want to modify it, lock, stock and barrel ?”

“What I would like is to see Bengal placed under one Lieutenant-Governor with an executive council of six, of whom two should be Indians. You will have to come to this, for the new province is at present placed in a position of inequality with the old, having no executive council. The next proposal, and one which commanded from of old time the balance even of official opinion, was to divide Behar from Bengal. The people of Behar are distinct in race and language from the

Bengalcees. All administrative advantages claimed for, the original partition would be secured by this arrangement without offending national sentiment. So long as the Bengalce nation is unnaturally cleft in twain by the sword of Lord Curzon, so long will agitation and unrest continue."

#### DEPORTEES.

"Now as to the deportees !"

"They ought never to have been deported without charge and without trial. They ought at once to be allowed to return home. I hope that will not be long delayed. They are good men, upright citizens who did not deserve deportation."

"And then ?"

"Then Regulation III of 1818 should be repealed or declared illegal. This regulation, passed by a subordinate legislature, deprives the Bengalce subjects of His Majesty of their inalienable rights as British subjects to the privilege of *Habeas Corpus*. I would like repeal outright, for if we bear the burdens and accept the responsibilities of British subjects we ought to have the privileges of freedom from arbitrary arrest, which no one has denounced more strongly than Lord Morley himself."

"Circumstances alter cases. India is not Ireland ; to preach is one thing, to practise is another. Is no compromise possible ?"

"As a first step," said Mr. Banerjea, "I would accept Mr. Mackarness's proposal that there should be no arrest without specification of the offence and that every accused person should be brought to trial within three months of his arrest."



"I propose as a compromise," I said, "that in future all Indians deported without charge or without trial should be sent to Great Britain in order that they might be at once elected to the House of Commons as Nationalist M. P.'s for Irish constituencies."

"I fear," said Mr. Banerjea, "that there might be difficulties in the way. But if a working alliance could be made, whereby one Indian Nationalist could be provided with an Irish seat, and the whole Irish party took up the Indian national cause, great things might be achieved."

"To return to your message. Do you want all the bomb-throwers, political cut-throats, etc., let loose to begin again their seditious practices?"

"There are no such persons in custody. I do not ask for an amnesty for the police who used bombs in a criminal conspiracy in order to ruin innocent men. I only want the political prisoners released. There are about sixty of them, and many of them have been sentenced to monstrous sentences for very venial offences."

Mr. Banerjea then went on to instance Mr. Tilak's sentence.

#### DUMA FOR INDIA.

"Do you want a Duma for India?"

"If you mean an assembly representing all India with financial control over the expenditure of India, I say yes. But I would say first give us autonomous provincial governments, with financial control over certain departments of provincial expenditure. Then build upon these provincial autonomies a central federal

council or assembly. That is what we ask, and that is what sooner or later we mean to have."

So far Mr. Banerjea. That is his programme. And "Surrender Not" is the nearest English equivalent to the pronunciation of his name, Surendra Nath. I do not think that he is likely to abandon any of the planks in his programme. John Morley, of the "Pall Mall Gazette" and of "The Life of Burke," would probably subscribe to them all. But as for Lord Morley—that is another matter.—*Review of Reviews.*

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## INDIAN UNREST.\*

The present unrest in India may be set down to the following causes :—(1) The utter disregard of Indian public opinion by the Government, of which the most notable illustration was afforded by the partition of Bengal. (2) The creation of racial animosities in at least two of the great provinces in India—the Punjab and East Bengal—by the introduction of racial bias into the administration. (3) The wide divergence between profession and practice on the part of the Government and the non-fulfilment of solemn pledges such as are given in the Queen's Proclamation and the consequent failure to associate the people in the Government of the country and to accord to them a recognised status in the administrations. (4) The contemptuous treatment of Indians by Europeans. (5) The hostile attitude of an influential section of the Anglo-Indian Press (whose views are listened to by the Government with respect) in regard to Indian aspirations and the violent and contemptuous language which often marks its utterances. (6) It may be added that the subsequent repressive measures have greatly intensified the unrest.

As regards the first of the aforesaid points, Lord Curzon's administration afforded the strongest illustration. The one end of Lord Curzon's policy was efficiency of administration to be secured by filling the higher offices with Europeans. Against this policy the Congress of 1904 recorded its protest. It was regarded

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\* *Daily Chronicle*, London.

as the practical reversal of the policy of the Queen's Proclamation. In carrying out his policy of efficiency, Lord Curzon treated Indian public opinion with open and undisguised contempt. On the top of all this came the partition of Bengal. It represents the deepest outrage upon popular sentiments which has been witnessed within the lifetime of this generation. When the partition of Bengal was first proposed, it evoked the strongest opposition from both the Hindu and the Muhammadan communities concerned.

Instead of modifying or abandoning the project, the Government, in the quiet recesses of the secretariat bureau and unknown to the public, enlarged the scheme, added the whole of North Bengal to the original project and, without giving the public the smallest hint of its proceedings, all on a sudden declared that the partition had been resolved upon. The indignation of the people was roused to fever heat, and an agitation was set up against it such as has never been witnessed. It is with us what Home Rule is with the Irish. We cannot give up the agitation against it.

The partition may be said to be the root-cause ; and, as Mr. Gokhale has truly observed, the unrest of Bengal has caused the unrest of all India. There are new facts of the most convincing nature created by the partition of Bengal which call for the reconsideration of this measure. Before the partition was carried out, Hindus and Muhammadans lived in amity and good-will. Since the partition considerable ill-will has been created between the two communities. The bulk of the inhabitants of the new province are Muhammadans and they have been taught to believe that the province has been created for their special benefit, and that they are a

privileged class. The Government made no secret of their intention that they wanted to create a Muhammadan province.

Among the fruits of the partition may be mentioned : (1) The unrest in the new province which has created the unrest in Western Bengal and all over India. (2) The policy of repression which followed the partition and has not yet been abandoned, adopted with a view to put down the unrest. (3) The ill-will between Hindus and Muhammadans, who had hitherto lived in peace and amity, which must be a permanent source of embarrassment to the administration. (4) The class bias which is apparent to the policy and the proceedings of the authorities.

The Queen's Proclamation was issued on the 1st November 1858. The proclamation had abolished race as the test of qualification for high office. The resolution of May 1904 affirmed that race connotes qualities and that the Imperial Service (which is the highest service in India) should be a *corps d' elite* to be filled for the most part by Europeans and that even in the technical branches of the public service, the higher appointments should be their monopoly. It is worthy of note that under the Muhammadan rule, race or religion was no barrier to employment in the highest offices, and that Hindus often filled the most responsible offices in the State.

The contemptuous treatment of Indians by Europeans, and the hostile attitude of a powerful section of the Anglo-Indian Press are matters of public notoriety. Some time ago the Indian Association of Lahore, in an official letter, called the attention of the Government of the Punjab to certain articles which appeared in the "Civil and Military Gazette" of Lahore, which constituted, to

quote the words of the Government letter, "a campaign of calumny against the Indian community in general and the educated class in particular."

The reply of the Government (dated 1st November 1907) was interesting and instructive. It admitted the charges against the "Civil and Military Gazette," but declined to take any legal proceedings. Yet for offences of the same kind, the editor and the proprietor of the "Punjabee" (an Indian newspaper) were prosecuted by the Government, and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment by the Courts of Law. The law is thus held in abeyance against Anglo-Indian and Muhammadan writers, indulging in the fiercest racial provocatives. Against Hindu offenders of the same class, its terrors are enforced in all their rigour. Yet the fact remains that the Hindus form the bulk of the population in India.

The present unhappy lawless developments have undoubtedly their roots in the prevailing discontent. When a whole community is discontented and exasperated, it is only natural that some people more excitable than the rest should lose their heads and do foolish and violent things. The anarchic development is only one of the outward manifestations of a serious distemper in the body politic, the causes of which are to be found in the reactionary policy of the last sixteen years and more, and which reached its climax during Lord Curzon's regime.

Lord Morley's reform scheme is a notable and distinct step towards conciliation. India is rapidly advancing; and the reform scheme represents an effort conceived in the spirit of sympathy and liberality to adapt the administration to the newly developed requirements of the situation. It is altogether a mistake to assume, as

the special correspondent of the "Times" does, that the scheme makes concessions that are lavish and unsought for. On the contrary, it does not, in some important matters, come up to our anticipations. We have not got the power of the purse which we wanted, at least in some important departments of the State, and we have not got a definite or effective measure of self-government, which we have been urging from the Congress platform. But it is a beginning, and a good beginning, and our people welcomed it as such. In Bengal, however, there is a serious difficulty. The partition remains unmodified and Lord Morley has told us that he would be no party to the reversal of the partition. What Bengal wants is not the reversal but some modification of the partition.

How deplorable the blunder of the partition has been will appear from the policy of repression that has been followed in order to combat the feeling which the partition has evoked. There could be no stronger condemnation of the partition than the adoption of a policy which is in such entire conflict with British traditions of Government. The main features of that policy are : (1) House-searches ; (2) domiciliary visits by the police ; (3) suppression of societies by executive order ; (4) deportations without trial. House-searches are most repugnant to Indian feeling. In one case the High Court granted damages for Rs. 500 to a zemindar whose cutcherry (court-house) had been searched by the Magistrate of Mymensingh.

In by far the majority of cases the searches were fruitless, and only served to create irritation. They have created a sense of uneasiness among the Indian community. At Dacca, the capital of the new province,

about 200 young men are treated as suspects, and their houses are visited by the police almost every night. No charges have been brought against them. The head and front of their offence seems to be that they were members of associations which have since been suppressed by order of the Government, but which were perfectly legal when they were connected with them.

Several associations have been suppressed by executive order, without their being allowed the opportunity of explanation or defence. Among them was the Bandhab Samiti of Barisal in East Bengal which did splendid work during the Barisal famine of 1906-7, and whose objects were : (1) The promotion of indigenous industries ; (2) the settlement of disputes by arbitration ; (3) the promotion of village sanitation. The suppression of an association like the Bandhab Samiti has naturally created very widespread dissatisfaction. As regards the deportations, Mr. Buchanan said from his place in the House of Commons that they were based "solely" on the report of the police and we know from the judgment of Chief Justice Sir Lawrence Jenkins how unscrupulous the police in Bengal are, and how unsafe it is to accept their statements. In the case which Lala Lajpat Rai brought against the "Englishman" newspaper for stating that he had been deported for tampering with the loyalty of Indian sepoy, the Court held that the statement was "a malicious lie." The defence was that it was substantially the statement made by the Government in Parliament. Damages amounting to £ 1,000 were awarded to Lala Lajpat Rai. All these repressive measures have intensified the excitement and unrest. To mix up coercion with conciliation is to neutralise the good which



conciliation may produce by the unhappy leaven of coercion.

I would suggest the following remedial measures :—  
(1) That the partition of Bengal should be modified. It is the root cause of the unrest in Bengal, and, as Mr. Gokhale has observed, the unrest of Bengal means the unrest of all India. I may here point out that the Punjab was tranquillised by the redress of a local grievance—*viz.*, the vetoing of the Colonisation Bill by the Viceroy. (2) That the policy of repression should be abandoned and those who have been deported restored to liberty. The Indian public deplore the recent tragedy but they earnestly hope that it will not prejudicially affect the case of the deportees. (3) That the Government should observe the most rigid impartiality as between race and race and creed and creed. This has always been the strongest bulwark of British rule in India. Any suspicion on the part of the people that this policy has been departed from, would be a source of serious administrative embarrassments and of deep disappointment to a large class of His Majesty's subjects. (4) That a steady advance should be made towards the fulfilment of the pledges given in the Queen's Proclamation in the matter of the appointment of Indians to offices of trust and responsibility.

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## A SESSION OF THE CONGRESS IN LONDON.\*

A Session of the Indian National Congress in London is by no means a new suggestion. It is an old idea which has often been broached and has as often been abandoned. Enormous have been the difficulties in the way of carrying it out, and no serious attempt has ever been made to face and overcome them. We have talked glibly enough ; and have written on the subject with force and emphasis. But it has always remained a more or less pious aspiration to be fulfilled by a sturdier set of Congressmen, with their moral fibre strengthened by strenuous fight in the service of the Motherland.\* The late Mr. Caine would have rejoiced to have been the organizer of a session of the Congress in London, and Mr. Keir Hardie has been persistent in his appeals in this behalf. There are times and seasons for the fruition of great ideals ; and to me it seems that the time has come for the holding of a session of the Congress in the capital of the Empire, with the highest benefit to our people. The British Public are now in an attitude of inquisitiveness about Indian affairs. Apathy has given place to a real desire for knowledge about Indian affairs. India is no longer a mere geographical expression which excites no interest or attention. Read the English newspapers and periodicals, and you will find that a much larger space is devoted to Indian considerations than ever had been done before in the lifetime of this generation ; and the English Press in all

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\* A contribution to the *Indian Review* for October, 1909.

its branches is always keenly responsive to the trend of English opinion and sentiment. At such a time when the mind of the British public is so wide open to the reception of impressions about India, it seems to me to be our supreme duty to saturate it with our ideas and to give it an impulse and direction which would be beneficial to India. The Englishman is slow to move, but his sympathies are entirely on the side of Justice and Liberty. Anglo-India has now the ear of the British public through the numerous Anglo-Indian correspondents of English newspapers in this country who naturally reflect the views of their class. That we are not able to make our voice heard or felt in England or in Europe and America is our own fault. We have too often allowed judgment to go by default. We have never made an organized effort to present our standpoint of the Indian problem to the British public and the civilized world. Our opponents, the enemies of Indian progress, are the masters of the situation, the directors of the public opinion of the civilized world in regard to our affairs. Our efforts, in this direction, have been spasmodic, futile, lacking the persistency and organization which alone can ensure success. Deputations sent by fits and starts, occasional telegrams despatched to the English newspapers, the upkeep of an organ of Indian opinion in London which we only half-heartedly support, exhaust the measure of our efforts to enlighten the public opinion of England and of Europe. There must, indeed, be more persistency and more strenuousness in the organization of this branch of our work. A regular Press Service between this country and England, setting forth the Indian standpoint, yearly deputations to England and a session of

the Congress in London seem to me to represent the supreme needs of the hour in our efforts to place our views before the civilized world. We cannot stand isolated in our national work. We need the sympathies of England and of civilized mankind. But we must instruct before we can awaken sympathy. And so just and righteous is our cause that we feel that we have only to rescue it from the misrepresentations of malicious critics, and the sympathies of civilized mankind will be infallibly enlisted on our behalf. The success of our deputations in England has proved this truth. The deputations of the future would be even more successful than they have been in the past, if they were preceded by a session of the Congress in London. A meeting of the Congress in London in the present attitude of the British public would create a profound impression on British public opinion which would be reflected in the Press of Europe and America. It would dissipate a vast mass of misunderstanding which now prevails about India. It would curtail the illimitable facilities for misrepresentation which the enemies of Indian progress now enjoy. It would awaken deep sympathy and a deeper desire for knowledge. Altogether a session of the Congress in London would constitute a notable event in the history of our political activities. The effort itself would be a great lesson in self-help. For every day in our lives, we have to help ourselves by calling in the aid of our neighbours and others. What is true of individual life is in a greater measure true of national life. For the nation to-day does not and cannot stand apart from the great federation of mankind—the brotherhood of humanity. For the session of the Congress we want the men—we want the money

There will be no difficulty about the money. If the idea is approved of by the nation, the money will assuredly be forthcoming. There may be some difficulty about the men, in the United Provinces and Madras where the observance of caste-rules is perhaps stricter than in other parts of the country. But large numbers of young men have gone to England from Madras and the North-Western Provinces ; and surely the leaders may follow the bright example set by their younger compatriots. Nor do I think would it be difficult, to charter, if need be, a special steamer which may facilitate the observance of caste-rules. The ways and means do not, I think, present an insuperable obstacle. What is wanted is that the nation should definitely resolve to hold a session of the Congress in London, and the earlier the better. I appeal to the nation in the name of our most sacred interests to form this resolve. No time could be more opportune. Let us take advantage of it and sow the seeds which in the fulness of time will enable us to reap an abundant harvest of good. We owe this duty to posterity.

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## PERSONAL.

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JOSEPH MAZZINI.

*[The following address on Joseph Mazzini was delivered at a Meeting of the Utlarpara Hitakari Sabha, Calcutta, held on the 2nd April 1876.]*

GENTLEMEN,

I freely confess. I consider it a great privilege to be permitted to address such a distinguished body as the Hitakari Sabha ; I say distinguished, not because of the wealth, rank, or social influence of any of its members, however great these may be, but because of the eminent patriotism which characterises your Sabha To succour the needy, the distressed and the indigent, to be the father of the fatherless, the friend of the poor, to work for the promotion of the education of our women, whose noble susceptibilities if properly developed, would materially contribute to the advancement of our country, are objects which must always commend your Sabha to the sympathy, the consideration, and the respect of all right-thinking men. But, patriotic as you are and noble and lofty as your aspirations may be, I think you cannot but feel the deepest interest, in the life and character of one of the sublimest spirits that ever graced the ranks of humanity, one of those shining lights that bursting forth from amid the impenetrable gloom which enveloped the fate of his native country, rose to lead his countrymen to a higher type of national existence, and

to exhibit in his own life and character an example of heroic self-sacrifice, of noble self-endurance, of burning love for mankind, of steadfast hatred for tyranny, such as have covered the name of Joseph Mazzini with immortal glory and have made that name the watchword of freedom, the symbol of down-trodden races, and the rallying point of dispersed nationalities. Gentlemen, I confess I tremble before the magnitude of the task I have imposed upon myself, and I say so in all sincerity of heart. When I recall to mind the splendour of Mazzini's character, the greatness of his self-sacrifice, how he flung away the prospects of a life full of rich promises of earthly greatness, in order that he might consecrate his energies to the accomplishment of Italian unity and Italian independence, how in the prosecution of this noble purpose he was chased from one country to another, from his own native land to France, from France to Switzerland, and from Switzerland to England; when I recall to mind his unutterable sufferings, how he passed twenty years of his lifetime in a small miserable room with scarcely space enough for him to move about, how the most affectionate of men saw those nearest and dearest to him snatched away from him and cruelly slaughtered by the enemies of his country, how his heart yearned after his beloved mother, the companion of his early years; how amid all his trials, his sufferings, amid moments of doubt and hesitation, the clear, steady, and unflinching spirit of the man shone forth; I say when I recall all these things to mind, I feel that I stand in the dread presence of a being whose image I am not worthy to behold, I feel that I am, perhaps, trespassing upon consecrated ground, and I stand aghast at my own temerity.

But a sense of overwhelming duty bids me to proceed. I feel that Mazzini's is a life which my countrymen ought to be in possession of, for that life is full of lessons of the deepest importance to us all. The Italians were degraded, down-trodden and oppressed. Under the influence of Mazzini's teachings, they achieved their unity and their nationality, and now they are on the highroad to the climax of national greatness. As the Italians were miserable and degraded, so are we ; and as they rose, so might we rise, though fortunately in our case, from the favourable circumstances of our position, through far different means. It is because the life of Joseph Mazzini presents us in a most striking manner with those traits of character which we ought to imitate, and which secure national greatness, that I have ventured to introduce this subject to you here to-night.

Joseph Mazzini was born at Genoa in the year 1805. His father was a physician, his mother was a woman of great talent and deep affection, and she appears to have exercised a profound influence on the mental and moral character of the future hero of Italian independence. Gentlemen, I venture to lay down this broad and general proposition, that a mother exercises a deep and profound influence on the mental and moral character of her children, and that influence is in many respects wider, deeper, and more far-reaching than that of the father. The lives of great men furnish numerous instances in support of the truth of this proposition. The father of the *Duke of Wellington* was but a fiddler, while his mother was a woman of great talent, and of high ambition ; and accordingly we find that all the brothers of the Duke of Wellington were men of great mark, ability, and talent. His eldest brother was the Earl of Morning-



ton, who afterwards became Marquis of Welleseley and who, as you are aware, was one of the ablest of our Governors-General. No doubt there are many things in his administration which we feel bound to condemn, there are many things in that administration which the impartial voice of history will not approve, but we must do him the justice to record that he was one of the ablest men that ever filled the office of Governor-General of India. It is not necessary to waste too many words to show, that the Duke of Wellington was a man of consummate genius. The conqueror of Napoleon, the hero of a hundred fights, it must be admitted was a man of commanding talents. Another brother Lord Cowley was also a man of great ability. He was accredited as English Ambassador to the Court of the Tuilleries, and acquitted himself in the discharge of his delicate and difficult duties with credit and satisfaction.

Passing now from the Duke of Wellington to his great antagonist, Napoleon, we find that extraordinary man greatly indebted to his mother for his future eminence. He is reported to have declared to his private physician Dr. O'Meara, while pining away the last days of his life on the barren rock of St. Helena, that it was to his mother's influence that he must mainly ascribe the success which he was able to achieve in life and which at one time had dazzled and astonished Europe. We all know the great and beneficial influence which Alfred's mother exercised over the mind of young Alfred. Sir Walter Scott's mother is said to have exercised a similar influence in framing the mind of the great poet and novelist.

From the above instances, then, the conclusion becomes irresistible that mothers do exercise a great, a

profound and a far-reaching influence over the minds of their children. Are we not here, then, furnished with a powerful argument in support of female education? It is at all events quite clear that the advocates of female education are not dreamy enthusiasts, idle speculators who have not any solid facts to go upon. The facts of history, the biographies of great men, all speak to the importance of training the female mind. With these facts before me, therefore, I venture to say that the question of national progress is intimately dependent upon the question of female progress, and that if we wish to see our country great and prosperous, we must begin by directing our efforts to raise the condition of our women.

Gentlemen, passing now from this digression, let us fix our attention upon the early life of Joseph Mazzini. Even from his earliest years, it was apparent to those around him that he possessed a deeply sympathetic nature, and many touching stories are told in connection with this part of his life. I shall relate only one, as it happens to be typical. When Mazzini was only six years old, he happened to be out with his mother on a stroll. As he was going along, his eyes caught the sight of a beggar who was seated on the steps of a church. This spectacle of human misery made so profound an impression on the mind of the boy, that he stood before the church, transfixed and almost rooted to the spot. His mother suspecting that the sight of the beggar had frightened the boy, caught hold of him and forced him away. But no sooner had they gone a few paces, when Mazzini tore himself away from his mother, rushed into the arms of the beggar, huddled him with warmth, exclaiming "give him something, mother, give him some-

thing, mother." The old man returned the caresses of the child, and addressing his mother, said " Lady, love the child well, for he will love the people."

The political life of Joseph Mazzini may be said to begin on the first Sunday of April 1821. On that day, while he was out as usual with his mother, a sight of deep agony met his eyes. He saw a number of Italian refugees huddled together near the Strada Neova of Genoa, and reduced to the last extremity of poverty and distress. They had risen up in arms against one of the corrupt Governments of Italy, they had been defeated, and now they were looking forward to an asylum in a far off country, across the seas, where they might be secure against the vengeance of their victorious enemies, and where amid new scenes and new associations, they might forget the sorrows of their beloved mother country. The sight of the Italian patriots, in the last extremity of distress and poverty, made a deep impression on the mind of young Mazzini, and from that day he resolved to dedicate his life and energies to the salvation of his country. Young as he was, this resolution once formed, he pursued it through good report, and evil report, and amid unheard-of trials and sufferings.

Mazzini was brought up for the profession of the Law, and in due course of time became an advocate. To his parents, it was a day of great rejoicing, when their gifted son for the first time put on the advocate's gown. They confidently looked forward to a glorious career for him at the bar, a career which might perhaps place him on the pinnacle of earthly fame. But they were doomed to bitter disappointment. The son had already made up his mind, to dedicate his life and his energies

to the accomplishment of Italian unity. Mazzini loved his parents, but he loved his country more.

Mazzini had already joined the Carbonaris. The Carbonaris formed a secret association. There comes a period, gentlemen, in the history of a nation's development when these secret associations abound. When a nation having passed through a preliminary stage of moral preparation, is on the eve of entering into a contest with the object of subverting the Government under which it lives, the Government being opposed to the tendencies of the times and suppressing freedom with a high hand, then is it do we find these secret societies starting up on all sides around in prolific abundance. The Government has to be overthrown, the Government has to be subverted. The Government will resist if it has the power. Consequently all such attempts against the Government of the country must necessarily be carried on under the seal of solemn secrecy. Thus you will find in the history of Modern Greece, that it was a secret society, the Heitaria, which prepared the Greeks for that contest which culminated in the independence of their country. It was the secret society of the "*United Club of Irishmen*" which prepared the Irish for the great struggle of 1798 ; and finally it was the secret society of Young Italy founded by Mazzini, which by evoking the sentiment of national unity and national independence helped very materially towards the consummation of Italian unity and Italian independence.

I need hardly remind you, gentlemen, that there are no secret associations in India ; and it is indeed not necessary that we should have any. We are not rebels ; we are not , treasonably affected towards the

Government. We are loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen. We are indeed anxious to secure the permanence of her rule in this country upon the broad basis of a nation's affections. Let us have political associations by all means and as many of them as you like, but not secret associations. Let us work openly, in the full blaze of publicity and not in secret, for the regeneration of our country. Let in the full light of day to all our proceedings and let Government and its officers inspect them, if they choose.

Joseph Mazzini, was for the first time, imprisoned in July 1830. He had gone on some mission connected with the Carbonaris, and was betrayed through treachery. He was confined in the fortress of Savona. Let us, gentlemen, for a few moments, concentrate our attention upon this spectacle of youthful captivity. Mazzini was confined in the topmost story of the fortress. Before him lay the illimitable expanse of the ocean, above him was the vaulted canopy of heaven. With these dread symbols of eternity before him, Mazzini lay brooding in his prison-cell over the misfortunes of his country. Was Italy always to remain degraded and down-trodden? Was there to be no termination to her sufferings? Must the heart of the patriot for ever bleed? Was the home of Brutus and Cato, to be the den of tyrants and despots? These were the thoughts, these the feelings which agitated the mind of the youthful apostle of Italian freedom. The Carbonaris had indeed worked and struggled for Italian independence and unity. They had worked and they had failed. Was there then no hope for his country? Mazzini rightly concluded that the Carbonaris had proceeded altogether on a wrong principle. Italy was to be united; Italy

was to be free. But they had laid down that Italian unity and Italian independence were to be effected by means of foreign help. No, said Mazzini, if Italy was to be united and free, that great object must be accomplished by her own unaided strength, by the power of her own right arm. Italy must first learn the great lesson of self-reliance, self-dependence, before she could run the higher race for national unity and national independence. Foreign aid must be systematically eschewed. From within the walls of his prison, he formed the idea of establishing an association which was to supersede the Carbonaris, and which was to embody this great principle of absolute, thorough and complete self-dependence.

Emerging from his prison wall, he seriously directed his attention to the task of founding the association he had resolved upon. Already he had been exiled from his country ; already Italy had ceased to be his home. But he was a man of broad views and of wide sympathies. He made the world his home ; wherever he was, that was his home. Exiled from his country, he established himself at Marseilles ; and it was here that he established the association of Young Italy.

Young Italy was a secret association. The objects which it proposed to itself were the establishment of Italian unity and Italian independence, under a Republican form of Government. Italy was to be free. Italy was to be united. Italy was to be a Republic. Having placed these objects before him, the great apostle of Italian unity, set himself to the task of accomplishing them. And first the Italian mind must be roused to the necessity of Italian unity, Italian independence, and the establishment of an

Italian Republic. Moral revolution must precede the accomplishment of the material Revolution which he had sketched out in his mind. The moral Revolution of Italy was sought to be brought about by means of tracts and journals. At the same time Mazzini published a body of instructions for the guidance of the members of Young Italy. Some of the lessons which he endeavoured to enforce in these instructions are of the deepest importance, and embody principles of wide-spread application which you would do well to bear in mind. Well, then, gentlemen, in the first place, Mazzini taught that the purification of the soul by virtue is necessary for the attainment of any holy enterprise. He thus taught that moral regeneration, which in most cases is synonymous with spiritual regeneration, must precede political regeneration, and must precede the accomplishment of national greatness. Now, gentlemen, this is a proposition which receives confirmation from the facts of universal history. And, with your permission, I will dwell upon it for a few moments in order to place this great truth beyond the possibility of doubt or conjecture. What was the Puritan Revolt but the second act of the Reformation? The spirit of inquiry in England had been roused by the Reformation. It had at first been confined to religious topics. But it soon outstripped those limits and displayed its energy in the sphere of politics. Englishmen who had at first only inquired about the soundness of their religious doctrines, began before a century had elapsed to inquire about the soundness of the political institutions under which they lived. Doubt and dissatisfaction followed inquiry. They discovered that the power of the sovereign was far too great to be compatible with freedom, and that

the institutions under which they lived were in short a scandal and a disgrace to civilization. They resolved to curtail the power of the king and to pull down their institutions. There was a struggle between the king and his people. We all know what the result of that struggle was ; we all know how the proud fabric of British freedom was cemented by the blood of a king who had betrayed his trust. And indeed the keystone of that fabric was not laid till a foreigner had been summoned from across the seas, himself the proud defender of the liberties of his own country, to be the protector of British freedom.

In the same way, gentlemen, in France, *the French Revolution* may be said to have begun by an attack upon the Church. And when the Church had been demolished and the Jesuits had been expelled by 1750, the ground was shifted, and then commenced the attack against the State, an attack which led to the overthrow of the French monarchy and the achievement of human freedom.

So also, gentlemen, the purely *spiritual reformation of Nanak* paved the way for the political regeneration of the Sikh people, under the leadership of Guru Govind and his successors.

Viewed in the light of these historical facts, the Brahmo movement assumes an importance which it is impossible to exaggerate. I feel certain, gentlemen, that when the history of India comes to be written with that spirit of impartiality, that justness of sentiment, that breadth of conception, which the importance of the subject demands, a high and worthy place will be accorded to the Brahmo movement as one of the most powerful agencies of Indian progress and Indian civilization.

Thus then, gentlemen, we find from a broad survey



of history that moral and spiritual regeneration is the precursor of political regeneration. And are we not here furnished with the strongest incentive to the exercise of the highest morality? Our own happiness, the happiness of coming generations, depends upon the practice of virtue, upon the observance of high principles. Who that has a heart that will not respond to this call of duty and strive after a conscientious discharge of patriotic duties, in the name of posterity?

There is another principle of universal application which Mazzini lays down in his instructions for the guidance of young Italy, and upon which I propose dwelling for a few moments. Mazzini says, the feeling of nationality is necessary before a nation could exist, that in fact the *desire* for national existence must precede the *achievement* of nationality. We might again appeal to the facts of history in support of the truth of this broad proposition.

You are probably aware, gentlemen, that the Greeks achieved their freedom in the year 1827. For ages, the Greeks had suffered from the influences of a foreign rule. But about the middle of the last century, the aspiration for nationality first dawned upon the Greek mind. Slowly, silently, and gradually, the idea widened and deepened, till at last it nerved and prepared the Greeks for that struggle which culminated in the achievement of their independence. In the same way, the teachings of Guru Govind roused in the minds of his disciples a lofty desire for political freedom and national ascendancy, a desire which paved the way for the ultimate establishment of a Sikh Kingdom. And lastly, did not the writings of Mazzini, by kindling in the Italian mind a desire for Italian unity and Italian independence,

materially contribute towards the consummation of those great ends ?

A journal was established in connection with Young Italy. The journal propagated ideas dangerous to the petty and tyrannical Governments in Italy. Its introduction into Italy was therefore at once interdicted. But it is seldom that Governments are successful in enforcing such prohibitory laws, especially when such laws are against popular sentiment. The journal continued to be introduced into Italy as before, in defiance of prohibitory and interdictory laws. In its desperation the Italian Government of Piedmont bethought itself of French aid ; and the Government of France, (for it was at Marseilles that the journal was printed and published), was desired to prohibit the publication of the journal in French territory. Corrupt Governments are always in league with one another. The publication of the journal was prohibited, and Mazzini was exiled from France. Driven from France, he sought shelter in Switzerland, and from there he planned his first expedition which was against Savoy. The expedition proved a complete failure. Mazzini's friends now endeavoured to persuade him that Italian unity and Italian independence were a dream, that it was at all events beyond his power to hasten or accomplish them and that he had therefore better give up that object, which he had taken up as the task of his life. But Mazzini's position was taken ; his lot in life was cast, and he refused to recede. The consummation of Italian unity, the consummation of Italian independence might be a dream, but it was a dream, which was very dear to him, and he was not to be persuaded into giving it up.

Mazzini's was a broad and expansive mind. His

sympathies were wide. Italy, no doubt, lay nearest to his heart. But the guardian deity of Italy, that presided over the portals of his heart, was not a jealous god that excluded all other objects of affection and adoration. He yearned after Italian unity and Italian independence, but he longed also to see the reign of democracy and liberty established throughout Europe. Mazzini also rightly concluded that if he could substitute throughout Europe the reign of peoples for the reign of monarchs, he would secure for the cause which was so dear to him, the support of the moral opinion of Europe. Under the influence of these beliefs, the great apostle of Italian unity established the Association of Young Europe in Switzerland in 1834. It is not necessary, gentlemen, that I should detain you with any detailed account of this Association. Its constitution was based upon the model of Young Italy.

But after the failure of the expedition against Savoy, Mazzini and his followers were subjected to a severe persecution. They were exiled from Switzerland. Mazzini had now no place left for him in the European Continent which might offer him an asylum. The proscribed of his own country, the proscribed of France, the proscribed of Switzerland, he turned his thoughts naturally towards that great and interesting country, the island home of freedom, the country of Pym, Vane and Hampden, consecrated by the blood of a thousand patriots. He took a loving farewell of Switzerland, and in 1837 for the first time found himself among the island homes of England.

But in the year before, Mazzini had passed through a terrible crisis. In that year, one of those tempests of moral doubt and scepticism to which minds devoted to

noble ends are especially susceptible, had overtaken him. Mazzini had made great and terrible sacrifices for the accomplishment of the aim of his life. But, up to this time, success had not crowned his efforts. Nor was it, in his own person, that he had made these sacrifices. At his beck and at his bidding the youth and the manhood of Italy had risen up by hundreds and thousands to lay down their lives at the altar of their country's independence, and yet success had not crowned their efforts. Was the accomplishment of Italian unity and independence then possible, or was it only a dream? If indeed it were a dream, where then would he stand? What would then be his position? The blood of how many martyrs would then rest upon his shoulders? How many wives had he made widows, how many children orphans, how many sisters had he deprived of their only brothers, how many mothers of their only children, the stay of their lives, the support of their old age. And yet perhaps all these calamities he had brought upon countless homes, in the prosecution of a mere dream, a chimera, a phantom. These distressing thoughts choked him, and withered away the very life that was within him. He was half tempted to lay violent hands on himself. But gradually and slowly the clear, bright, serene spirit of the man shone forth from amidst the almost impenetrable gloom which surrounded him. His religion came to his aid. Mazzini was a man of deep, fervent piety, and a soul illumined by piety and earnest religious fervour was, at last, able to cope with that tempest of doubt which had nearly ship-wrecked his moral nature.

But it seemed as if the angel of fate which had presided over the birth of the prophet of Italian unity had

predetermined that his path through life should be strewn with sorrows. Scarcely had he set his foot in England, when we find him confronted by the most abject and degrading poverty. His mother had all along, unknown to his father, supplied him with funds. These remittances in England he divided between himself and three other associates. His mother had meant the money for himself ; he meant it for himself and three other comrades. The result was that it was not sufficient for any body. His greatness of soul would not permit him to enjoy the comforts of life, while his comrades, the companions of his exile, would be starving. He was thus reduced to such great straits that he had on one occasion to pawn his old coats and boots, to obtain the necessaries of life for himself and his companions. If he had pursued the profession of an Italian advocate, he would possibly not have known what adversity was. But the path towards the height of moral greatness is strewn with sorrows and sufferings, and the great apostle of Italian unity bore them all cheerfully in the name of his beloved Italy. Literature, however, came to his rescue. He was a man of great literary powers, and by the exercise of his literary talents he soon got a competency in England.

I must ask you, gentlemen, in this place, to dwell with me for a few moments upon a remarkable trait in Mazzini's character, a trait which has only been feebly illustrated by the events narrated in the course of my address. Up to this time, we have seen that Mazzini was a man of profound genius, with vast powers of organization, of great literary accomplishments, of deep love for his countrymen and humanity at large. We shall presently find another important trait in his

character exhibited in a striking manner. We shall find that he was equally remarkable for sagacity and shrewdness, and was thus quite a match for the corrupt Governments of Europe. It is with some regret that I enter upon the consideration of those circumstances which serve to illustrate this important feature in Mazzini's character, because they cast such grave and serious aspersions upon the character of some English statesmen, whose memories are deservedly held in high veneration by their countrymen. About the year 1844, while Mazzini was staying in England, a suspicion rose in his mind that his letters were tampered with, in the English Post Office. He found that letters addressed to him always arrived two hours later than the proper time. To assure himself of the reasonableness of this suspicion as well as also to collect evidence, he posted in the presence of witnesses, in the same place in London, several letters some addressed to himself, others addressed to fictitious persons at the same residence. His witnesses and himself then came back to his lodgings to be present at the delivery of the letters. Now the letters addressed to Mazzini arrived two hours later than those addressed to the fictitious persons. He obtained written statements of these circumstances from his witnesses. He pushed the inquiry still further. On one occasion, he posted letters addressed to himself enclosing grains of fine hair, sand, &c., so folded that if the letters were opened, these must necessarily fall out. The letters came back to him without the grains of sand, fine hair, and so forth. Having in this way collected a considerable body of evidence, which established beyond all doubt that his letters were tampered with, in the English Post Office, he placed his case in the hands of a



Gentlemen, I must now hasten over the remaining incidents in the life of Mazzini. The ideas of Italian unity and independence had spread far and wide, and had infected all circles of society from the highest to the lowest. The Italian mind had been stirred to its very depths. The teachings of "Young Italy" were now bearing fruits, the flame of insurrection burst forth in several parts of the country. In 1848, Lombardy raised the standard of revolt against the Austrian domination ; other parts of Italy followed the example. It is not necessary, gentlemen, that I should take you through these sanguinary details of the struggle for Italian unity. Suffice it to say that Mazzini took a leading part in them. Let it be recorded to his eternal honour that he never planned an insurrection or an expedition in which he could not take a prominent part. His was a noble and a generous soul, which recoiled from the thought of placing others in positions of peril which he could not share. In 1859, the principality of Naples lay at the feet of Garibaldi, but Garibaldi made it over to the king of Piedmont. The cause of Italian unity thus advanced one step nearer towards realization. A still further advance was made in this direction in 1866. In that year taking advantage of the struggle between Austria and Prussia, Italy declared war against Austria, with France as an ally. Venice was added to France, which exchanged it with Italy for a frontier Italian province. Thus then with the unimportant exception of Venice, the whole of Italy was divided between two potentates, the Pope and the king of Piedmont. Italian unity was consummated at last in 1870, when two neighbouring nations were engaged in a sanguinary and fratricidal contest. When in 1870 France and Germany were



wasting their energies in a mortal conflict, the French Zoaves who had hitherto upheld the tottering throne of the Vicar of Christ, had to be withdrawn from Rome. The Italian troops taking advantage of this opportunity entered Rome, deposed the Pope, and proclaimed the unification of Italy, under Victor Emanuel. The Austrians had already been driven out of Italy. Italy was thus free, and was now united. The dream of the prophet of Italian independence had been accomplished, but only partially. Italy was to be free, Italy was to be united ; but she was to enjoy these blessings under a Republican form of Government. Mazzini would gladly have assented to the monarchical regime, if indeed he could be induced to believe that that regime was the outcome of the national will. But he believed that Italy was at heart Republican, and that the national feeling in favour of the monarchical regime had been influenced by Government pressure. Strongly impressed with this belief, he set himself to the task of editing a Republican Journal called the 'Roma del Popolo' to propagate his views on this subject. Death came upon him while he might be said to have been engaged in this task. He died of pleurisy at Pisa on the 10th of March 1872.

Thus died Mazzini the hero of Italian unity and independence. I owe you an apology, gentlemen, for the manner in which I have treated this great subject. I cannot indeed flatter myself that I have succeeded in presenting of you the many noble traits of character which were exhibited in the career of this great man. His was a life choked with sorrows, with trials, with sufferings, yet it was a life of ceaseless, unsparing, and self-imposed

work for the good of his countrymen and of humanity. Many of us, after perhaps having delivered a lecture at some public meeting, or having attended some public discussion, or having paid a subscription in aid of some public object, are apt to consider ourselves as patriots. I would ask these gentlemen, to come forward and stand by the side of Mazzini, compare their love for mankind with his, their patriotism with his, their self-sacrifice with his, and then call themselves patriots if they choose. The life of Mazzini teaches us, in the most striking manner, the great duty of self-sacrifice. If we wish to see our country great and prosperous, let us learn a lesson of self-sacrifice at the feet of the great apostle of Italian unity. Let us learn to love our country with that unselfishness with which Mazzini loved Italy. Let us learn to forget self before the interests of Fatherland. I cannot indeed believe that you are wholly wanting in capacity for self-sacrifice. Am I to understand that the countrymen of Sakyamuni, the countrymen of him who flung away the splendours of a throne in order that he might become the apostle of humanity, are wanting in self-sacrifice? I cannot, I will not believe it. I hold that we have in us the latent embers of this heaven-born power, and that as knowledge advances and our faculties are enlarged, the embers of this latent capacity will rekindle themselves with a tenfold brilliancy and lead to heroic exertions and noble deeds. Mazzini's labours teach us the importance of political associations and how such associations must be worked in order to secure the highest amount of good possible to be secured from them. Mazzini was the founder of numerous associations, of Young Italy, of Young Europe, and of one or two other

associations which I have not mentioned. Now, gentlemen, I venture to lay down this general proposition with regard to the duty of political associations. I venture to think that it is the duty of political associations more to educate public opinion with regard to important public questions of the day, and less to present petitions to Governments, on every conceivable and inconceivable occasion. I am afraid, gentlemen, none of the political associations in this country aspire to accomplish this great object with anything like the energy which the subject demands. I wish to speak of our existing political associations with respect : of the British Indian Association especially I wish to speak with the highest respect. No native of India can be insensible to the many blessings which that body has been the means of conferring on this country; no native of India can be ignorant of the fact, that it was the British Indian Association which first stimulated the political activity of the people of this part of India. But at the same time, I feel bound to remark that, that association has not any organisation for the performance of this important duty, *viz*, the creating of a healthy public opinion on all the leading topics of the day. We do not want many political associations whose only concern would be to heap cart-loads of petitions on the devoted heads of our Government officials. On the contrary, let us have political associations on the model of the Catholic Association of Daniel O'Connell. How was it that the great Irish Liberator wrung from unwilling Parliament and an unwilling Minister the great boon of Catholic Emancipation Bill? It was certainly not by deluging Parliament or the Lord Lieutenant with petitions, but by creating a deep and an ardent

feeling in the minds of his countrymen in favour of the Bill. Let our political associations seriously set themselves to the task of educating Public Opinion ; and then, I say, they will supply a real want and discharge an important public duty.

Gentlemen, Mazzini lived and died for Italian unity. He rightly judged that Italy would never be great, unless the different Italian peoples were united together by the bonds of a common nationality and common institutions. Might we not see in this much to guide and to instruct us ? Is Indian greatness possible unless we are thoroughly welded together into a compact mass ? If the question of uniting the varied nationalities of India may seem chimerical, why may we not try and establish at least a bond of sympathy, of fellow feeling and brotherly love, between the varied races that inhabit this vast continent ? Are not Bengalis, Madrassis, Mahrattas, the people of the Punjab, of Oudh, of Central India, all brothers ? Why should it then be so difficult to establish between them that feeling of sympathy which nature with her own hand has preordained ? Let us learn, gentlemen, to feel for a brother's griefs and sorrows. If trials and sufferings overtake the Madrasi, the Mahratta, or the Punjabi, let us as brothers stretch out to them the hand of sympathy and fellowship. And when the whole of India comes to be bound in this treble chain of love, sympathy, and esteem, the day of Indian greatness would not be distant. And I have, gentlemen, a suggestion in this connection to make. We have a very useful institution among us, the Hindu Mela. Now, why not make it an Indian Mela ? Changing its character and widening its scope, why not ask the representatives and leading men

of the different Presidencies to meet us once every year ? We should then have done something towards cementing the bonds of sympathy and love that ought to exist between the different provinces.

But, gentlemen, if we cannot transport ourselves beyond the limits of Bengal, why not strive to establish a bond of sympathy and love between the different sections of our own community in Bengal ? Can it be said that there exists anything like good feeling between the different sections of our community in Bengal ? Is it not too often the practice for the Brahmos to heap abuse and contumely on sceptics, and for sceptics to heap abuse and contumely on Brahmos ? Do we not often find Hindus and Mussulmans engaged in a war of bitter words and harsh recriminations ? Away with such abuse, such unseemly wrangling, such recriminations. Hindus, Mussulmans, Brahmos, Christians, and Sceptics ! all learn to merge your differences and your strifes, and in the name of a common country, enlist yourselves under the banner of the religion of the Fatherland. Prove yourselves true to the banner of this noble religion, and the countless blessings of unborn generations will be upon you.

But these are not the only lessons which the great apostle of Italian unity taught and for which he lived and died. Mazzini taught the great doctrine of self-reliance. May we not here also learn a lesson of the utmost practical importance ? I firmly believe, gentlemen, that if India is ever to be great and prosperous, it could only be brought about by the aid of our own resources. I rejoice to find that we have already learnt the first lesson in the great doctrine of self-reliance. What is Dr. Sircar's project for the establishment of a

science association, but the embodiment of the principle of self-reliance? We hail the prospect of the speedy opening of this institution, not only because, when established, it would be a noble temple of science, in every respect worthy of its distinguished projector, and because it would stimulate and encourage the cultivation of science in this country; but also because it would be an indigenous institution conceived by an Indian, supported by Indians, and worked by Indian agency. Dr. Sircar has systematically eschewed Government aid, and if Sir Richard Temple has come forward to help the institution with his noble munificence, the greater is the credit due to him. It is because, gentlemen, Dr. Sircar's Science Association is to be an indigenous institution, that it deserves our warmest sympathy and support.

We have indeed learnt our first lesson in the necessity of self-help, and if we continue to advance in this direction in the same way as we have done within the last few years, I venture to predict the dawning of a bright and glorious day for India. But let us have faith in the future of our country, and let us have a firm belief in the high destinies which are in store for her. I am afraid, gentlemen, it is too often the practice with our skin deep patriots to fold up their hands, to do nothing, to cover themselves up in an impenetrable veil of apathy and indolence, because forsooth India must ever remain as degraded as she is now. I call these men traitors, the enemies of their country. May the execration of their countrymen be their lot. Have they ever taken the trouble to study the past history of their country? Did not Vijaya Sing, a native of Bengal; the eldest son of the King of Bengal, conquer Ceylon?

Was not Panduvasa, the founder of the line of historical kings of Ceylon, a native of Bengal ? Were not the ancient Bengalees remarkable for their courage, and their spirit of maritime enterprise ? Was not Bengal noted in the commercial records of those times ? Was not Tamluk a great seaport town in those days, from which in a Bengali vessel the great Chinese traveller Fah-Hian started on his homeward bound journey ? I ask those who despair of the future of their country to ponder well over these facts, and let them then despair of the future of their country, if they can. But why need I confine myself within the limits of Bengal, why should I not transport myself to the seat of the ancient Aryans of India ? Let me wander amid the consecrated relics of revered sires. Were not our Aryan ancestors great in Literature, great in Science, great in War, great in Morals ? Who will tell me that the country of Valmiki or Vyasa, of Goutama, of Sankaracharya, of Panini and Patanjali, will for ever remain in the depths of her present degradation. If the mere mention of the names of these immortal worthies strikes a chord in our heart, will not the proud consciousness that some portion of their noble blood runs through our veins, inspire us with love for country, love for truth, love indeed for everything that is great, noble and sublime in human nature ? Descendants of the ancient Aryans of India ! will you not prove yourselves worthy of your lineage, worthy of the great name you inherit ? Gentlemen, I have learnt the lessons of history in vain, if I could not predict a great future for my country. We may not indeed live to see that day. But let us work, gentlemen, harmoniously together to lay the foundation-stone of the fabric of Indian greatness.

## THE RIPON MEMORIAL MEETING.

*[A public Meeting of the native inhabitants of Calcutta and its Suburbs was held at the Town Hall, on Thursday the 11th December 1884, with a view to vote an address to His Excellency the Marquis of Ripon, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, on the eve of his departure from India. Upwards of 8,000 men were present. His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch Behar was in the Chair. Babu Surendranath Banerjea supported the second resolution which ran as follows]:—*

" That this Meeting views with great satisfaction the demonstrations that have been held in all parts of the country in honour of the retiring Viceroy and ventures to hope that His Excellency will regard them as the earnest of unabated confidence on the part of the Native community throughout India in his abilities as a ruler and as the expression of deep respect for his disinterested efforts to promote the welfare of the people of India ; and this Meeting, in bidding His Excellency farewell begs to express the earnest hope that His Excellency will continue to retain in the repose of his own home a lively interest in the land and in the people whom he has loved so well."

*Babu Surendranath Banerjea, in supporting the resolution, spoke as follows :—*

I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution which has been so ably proposed, and seconded by my two leaders. We have met here to-night to join our voices with those of our countrymen in other parts of the empire, to raise the chorus of grateful acclaim, in



recognition of the distinguished services of the illustrious statesman who is about to retire from his high office. The present generation cannot recall to mind a spectacle so grand or so imposing which it was our lot to witness last week, when all Calcutta, laying aside for the moment the pursuit of business, or the still more ardent pursuit of pleasure, turned out with all the elaborate demonstrations of oriental loyalty and devotion to honour the Viceroy who had become, in the eyes of the people, the incarnation of Justice and of that righteousness which exalteth a nation. It was a spectacle that was calculated to stimulate the inventive genius of the poet and of the artist, as I am sure it will baffle the descriptive powers of the future historian of India. Old men, hoary with age and bent down with the weight of years, cannot remember to have witnessed a scene which, in point of enthusiasm and devotion, rivals the loyal welcome which in olden times the people of Ajudhya accorded to the exiled Rama, on his return to his country and on his accession to the throne of his ancestors. So, too, modern Ajudhya pours forth its gratitude in manifestations of loyal welcome to the modern Rama, the protector of his people. A great deal has been said with reference to the character of this and other demonstrations. It has been urged that they do not represent the spontaneous movement of a great people ; but that they are the work of wire-pullers and of third-rate obscure agitators. I ask, where is that wire-puller, who, with the waive of his magical wand, can send down a nation on their knees, and extort from unwilling lips the accents of grateful praise? Such a wire-puller would be a man of formidable potency ; he would be like some of those heroes of

ancient times, whom the Greek States ostracised to ensure their own safety and to preserve the balance of the constitution. There is no such wire-puller ; nor even such a clique of wire-pullers. The truth is that the whole nation has risen like one man in obedience to a common impulse to honour him who so richly deserves honour at our hands. Let no unworthy attempt be made to take away aught from the character of these demonstrations. Let not our critics demean to the propagation of that which is not true. Let them boldly meet the facts in the face, and learn to recognise their significance. What do these demonstrations imply ? They are the spontaneous homage of a grateful people. Was ever such homage rendered to a foreign ruler ? Our history is memorable with great events, with the stories of great wars, of great conquests, of great annexations. But point out to me a single passage, in the whole range of Indian history, which commemorates in so remarkable a manner the triumph of peace and of righteous principles, as it has been the lot of Lord Ripon to achieve. What is the secret of this grand national demonstration ? What is the mystery which underlies it ? What is the charm which has held spell-bound the heart of a great people ? The secret is easily explained. The mystery melts away before the gaze of the observant enquirer. It is the honesty of the ruler, the purity of his intentions, the loftiness of his aims and purposes, his deep sympathy with the people, his statesmanlike grasp of the situation which have captivated all hearts and have awakened a nation's gratitude. We, orientals, are shrewd judges of character. Behind the graceful exterior, the profound, how, the courteous obeisance, there lurks the keen

intelligence that is never at a loss to judge of character. We have had the Delhi Assemblage with its profuse expenditure and its still more profuse promises, but we were never for a moment at a loss to understand the real character of that demonstration. We regarded it then, and we regard it still, and distant posterity will endorse the judgment, that it was the last of the brilliant series of fire-works which Benjamin Disraeli let off for the edification of the English people. We are not to be deluded by such shows, or by the mere empty trappings of power. We are no longer children. Thanks to beneficence of our rulers, we have long since passed that stage, and are now entering the period of vigorous adolescence. What we want is solid statesmanship founded upon the unchangeable principles of justice and equity. Such statesmanship we found in Lord Ripon, and hence it is that we respected him, that we honoured him, that we adored him. From the very outset Lord Ripon had a complete grasp of the situation and of the political wants and aspirations of our countrymen. Our Government is a bureaucracy, but faintly tempered by popular opinion. It is as old as this century, but within that time a mighty moral revolution has been effected. Great as has been the material development of the country, the moral revolution is completed, still, and will constitute, I venture to think in the judgment of the impartial historian, England's noblest title to her imperial sway in India. English education and a Free Press have revolutionised the country. Those men who founded British supremacy in India, who had the courage to win an empire for themselves, and the sagacity to consolidate it, were never at a loss to understand the duties of their new

situation and the responsibilities which it entailed upon them. Sir Charles Metcalf, replying to a deputation that waited upon him to congratulate him upon his liberation of the Press, observed :—"Whatever might be the will of Almighty Providence with respect to the future Government of India, it cannot be that we are permitted to be here merely to collect the taxes, to pay up the revenues, and to supply the deficiency. We are here for a higher and a nobler purpose,—to pour into the East the knowledge, the civilization, the arts and the sciences of the West." In pursuance of this policy thus nobly vindicated, schools have been established all over the country, and a Free Press has been rapidly disseminating the Principles of Liberty. New ideas have been called forth into existence, new aspirations have been created ; a moral revolution has been effected ;—the grandest on record, which will throw into the shade the proudest achievements of Englishmen in other parts of the world. A year of Waterloos will not equal it. What could be a subject of more legitimate pride to Englishmen than to know that, under the auspices of their rule, and under the influences of their education, a great and ancient country which had been sunk in the deepest depths of ignorance and superstition, is rapidly recovering her former position and bids fair, once again, to be the home of civilisation, of knowledge, and of the arts and sciences. But the Government remains the same ;—unchangeable alike in its traditions and principles. It was the same system of Government that was established by Warren Hastings ; that was perpetuated by Amherst and Minto ; that was emphasised by Lord Dalhousie, and that was followed in more recent times

by Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook. In the meantime popular aspirations had outgrown the Government, and a repressive rule had alienated the sympathies of the people. It was at such a time that Lord Ripon arrived. Having put an end to a tedious and inglorious war, His Excellency applied himself, with characteristic energy, to the question of domestic reform. We hear in these days a great deal about Russian ambition and of Russian advance in Central Asia. But with India contented and prosperous, with her countless millions at the beck of her English rulers, Russian invasion becomes a dream, a chimera, the phantom of an excited imagination. Russian invasion assumes the faint proportions of a bare possibility, only on the assumption of the existence of disaffection in India. Let it once be granted that India is loyal and contented, unswerving in her devotion to the Imperial throne, and the spectre of Russian invasion which looms beyond the passes of the Hindoo Koosh, melts away into the distant horizon. The ruler who has cemented the loyalty of the people, and has evoked their deepest gratitude, has not only rendered a great service to the people of India, but is entitled to the lasting gratitude of his own countrymen. Lord Ripon has thus rendered a double service to India and to England. In the name of this twofold service, I invite this great gathering of my countrymen to record their expression of deep gratitude to the retiring Viceroy. Well, one of the very first questions which Lord Ripon took up was that relating to Municipal reform. Referring to the importance of Municipal institutions, Mr. Gladstone has observed in one of his recent speeches that "they are the seedplots, around which and upon which habits of political thought and

political capacity are formed throughout the country." It is unnecessary to enter into the merits of Lord Ripon's scheme of Local Self-Government; but this I will say, that the foundations have been laid, and we have to build the superstructure upon them. If we succeed in the matter of Local Self-Government, we have a strong case with which we may go up to the Government and invite them to extend the principles of Local Self-Government to the wider concerns of Provincial Administration. We might, in short, ask them to reconstitute the Provincial Councils and even the Supreme Council itself. I know not whether there are any honourable members present at this meeting; but if there be, I make my courteous bow to them before I proceed to make my onslaught upon the institution which they represent. These Legislative Councils are so many happy families which debate nothing, discuss nothing, but meet only to register the preordained decrees of the Executive Government. They have not even the consoling reflection of being permitted, by means of interpellations, to go behind the acts of the executive Government. They are magnificent and gilded non-entities, very well suited perhaps to the conditions of a backward society, but utterly out of place among a keen and intelligent community such as ours. Now all this must be changed. If we are loyal to Local Self-Government, the attainment of national self-government becomes only a matter of time. But I have heard disappointment expressed by a certain journalist, whose utterances till lately were entitled to weight, with regard to the fruits of Local Self-Government. I would say to this journalist, and to all whom it may concern—"Let us wait and let us have patience

—let us not anticipate in a day the fruits of a century.” What are a few years in the life-time of a nation? There is such a thing as growth in political institutions. What was the House of Commons at first? What is it now? What was at first a mere deliberative assembly, summoned by the will of the Sovereign, and dependant for its existence upon his will, became in the course of time the dictator and ruler of the Sovereign himself. The seeds have been sown by the hands of the most beneficent ruler whom India has ever had. They are entrusted to our care, our keeping, and our guardianship. Let us watch over them with tender and parental solicitude, and I am sure that under the providence of God, we shall reap a plentiful harvest. If ever India should become a self-governing country under the protectorate of England, the glory and the honour of that achievement will belong to Lord Ripon, and to him alone. In the same way the credit of the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act belongs to Lord Ripon. The question of the repeal was left entirely to the discretion of the Viceroy, and on the 19th of January 1882—a day that shall be memorable in the annals of Indian progress—the Act was removed from the statute-book. If Sir Charles Metcalfe claims at our hands the homage to which he is entitled as the liberator of the Indian Press, some measure of our gratitude is at least due to the restorer of the lost liberty of the Vernacular Press. Attempts are being made in certain quarters to discredit the repeal of the Press Law. Extracts are from time to time published in the newspapers of this country, and which are telegraphed to newspapers in England—garbled extracts, as I have no hesitation in calling them—with a view to delude public opinion. But if the

Anglo-Native Press is true to those traditions of sobriety and moderation, which have been handed down from the days of Hurrish Chunder Mookerjee and which were emphasised by the example of the late illustrious Kristo Das Pal, we need have no apprehensions with regard to the fortunes of the Native Press of India. I fear, gentlemen, I have been trespassing too much upon your time, I have been trying your patience (*cries of—"No, no, and go on"*). It is unnecessary for me to enter into the varied measures of Lord Ripon's administration. The whole of his policy was based upon an earnest desire to carry out the gracious Proclamation of the Queen. What is this Proclamation? How do we regard it? What were the circumstances under which it was issued? These are important considerations, to which for a few moments I would venture to invite the attention of this meeting. The Proclamation is the *Magna Charta* of our rights and liberties. The Proclamation, the whole Proclamation, nothing but the Proclamation—is our watchword, our battle-cry. It is the ensign of battle and the ensign of victory. It is the gospel of our political redemption. Mark the circumstances under which that memorable document was issued. The country had just passed through the horrors of the Mutiny: the Queen had assumed the direct Government of the empire; for the first time the personal relationship between subject and sovereign had been established. It was under such circumstances, at such a time, upon such a historical occasion that her gracious Majesty the Queen was pleased to issue this Proclamation, and to add to the solemnity of the situation, the Almighty God was invoked to shower down



His blessings upon this beneficent act of imperial favour. But years passed away, and the gracious promises of the Proclamation were not fulfilled, and as late as the year 1877, Lord Lytton, upon an important public occasion, declared that the Proclamation remained inadequately redeemed. There are those who would give worlds to recall the Proclamation, who would spend all their legal lore and their ingenuity, and if my lawyer friends will permit me, their legal perversity, in thinning away the beneficent provisions of this memorable declaration, and who would regard it as the expression of a barren sentiment, good for a ceremonial, but good for nothing else. These are the men who hold that the unchangeable principles of morality are bounded by climatic considerations—that what is just and proper in the temperate regions, is unjust and iniquitous in this hapless torrid zone. Against such a monstrous doctrine the conscience of mankind proclaims—against such principles, the enlightened sentiment of the civilized world pleads, and it is against such a pernicious doctrine that Lord Ripon entered his protest in words that shall be graven in our minds and in the minds of our children's children. Let me read to you his protest :—"To me it seems a very serious thing to put forth to the people of India a doctrine which renders worthless the solemn words of their Sovereign, and which converts her gracious promises which her Indian subjects have cherished for a quarter of a century into a hollow mockery as meaningless as the compliments which form the invariable opening of an oriental letter. Sir Fitz-James Stephen, it seems to me, is not consistent, for he admits, in the course of the document which I have quoted, that the Proclamation

binds the Government of India in regard to the native Princes and States, but in regard to Her Majesty's own immediate subjects, it is according to his view of no force whatever, it gives no pledge, and it lays down no principle. But if it binds the Government towards the Princes of India, it binds it to the people of India as well. The document is not a treaty ; it is not a diplomatic instrument ; it is a declaration of principles of Government which, if it is obligatory at all, is obligatory in respect to all to whom it is addressed. The document, therefore, to which Sir Fitz-James Stephen has given the sanction of his authority, I feel bound to repudiate to the utmost of my power. It seems to me to be inconsistent with the character of my Sovereign and with the honour of my country ; and if it were once to be received and acted upon by the Government of England, it would do more than anything else could possibly do to strike at the root of our power and to destroy our just influence. Because that power and that influence rest upon the conviction of our good faith more than upon the valour of our soldiers and the reputation of our arms. I have heard to-day with no little surprise a very different argument. The Hon'ble Mr. Thomas, in his speech, in which he endeavoured to stir up the bitterness of a controversy which was dying out, and which was approaching a settlement, and to fan again the dying embers of race animosity, has asked—Was there ever a nation which retained her supremacy by the righteousness of her laws ? I have read in a book, the authority of which the Hon'ble Mr. Thomas will admit, that righteousness exalteth a nation, and my study of history, which has not been limited, has led me to the conclusion that it

is not by force of her armies or by the might of her soldiery that a great empire is permanently maintained ; but that it is by the righteousness of her laws, by her respect for the principles of justice. To believe otherwise appears to me to assume that there is not a God in Heaven who rules over the affairs of men, and who can punish injustice and iniquity in nations as surely as he can in the individuals of which they are composed. It is against doctrines like these that I desire to protest, and it is against principles of this description that the gracious Proclamation of the Queen was directed. So long, then, as I hold the office which I now fill, I shall conduct the administration in this country in strict accordance with the policy which has been enjoined upon me by my Queen and my Government.

The excellence of Lord Ripon's policy does not, indeed, consist in this measure or in that, but in the distinctly elevated moral tone which he imparted to the entire administration of the Empire. There was a distinctly forward movement along the whole line towards a definite goal, the path to which was illumined by that inspiration which is begotten of sympathy. There was no diplomacy, no political jugglery, no *legerdemain*, no Delhi assemblages to be followed by Madras famines, but everything was bright, clear, transparently honest. It is not for me to anticipate the verdict of history ; but if I am permitted to take a forecast of things future, this I will say without a moment's hesitation, that when the present shall have vanished into the ever-receding past, when the animosities of the present hour shall have given place to the dominance of the historic judgment, then the amplest

justice will be rendered to Lord Ripon, and in the illustrious muster-roll of Indian statesmen, he will take his place by the side of a Bentinck and a Canning. Lord Ripon has enthroned himself in the hearts of the people such as no other Indian ruler had before done, his word is more potent for good than have ever been the words of kings and emperors, and he will stand forth before posterity as the prophet-king of Anglo-Indian history, for he sought to govern the people, not so much with the aid of the material appliances of the great civilized Power of which he was the chief and the representative ; but with that moral domination, which represents the completest form of rule which man can assert over man. Lord Ripon has consecrated British rule with the celestial touch of Christian benignity. He has uplifted the Empire to a higher level of moral grandeur, he has surrounded the throne of the Queen-Empress with the greatest bulwark which it can enjoy—the affectionate gratitude of a contented people. Let the Russians come, if they may; let them be assisted by all the gallantry and the martial heroism of the fierce hordes of Central Asia ; so long as there are Ripons to rule over us, so long as the policy which he has initiated is maintained and upheld, the rolling wave of Russian invasion will be driven back behind the passes of the Hindoo Koosh, and the throne of the Empress-Mother, planted safe in the affections of a grateful people, will be our rallying-point, the symbol of our unity, of our loyalty and our devotion to British supremacy. Your Reception Committee have resolved to raise a suitable Memorial in honour of the retiring Viceroy. I wish them God-speed in this noble endeavour. But whether your Memorial be of marble

or of brass, Lord Ripon will live in the imperishable pages of history with a lustre all his own. The most suitable Memorial which you can raise in his honour is to consecrate your lives towards the extension and consolidation of that policy which Lord Ripon has bequeathed as a legacy to India and a legacy to England. England, I am sure, will do her duty in this matter. Britain, the august mother of free nations, will extend her justice and her beneficence to her great dependency. I invite you to perform your part of the duty, and, unless I am greatly mistaken in the character of my countrymen, and in the significance of this grand demonstration, I may assure myself of a cordial response. It now remains for us to bid farewell to Lord Ripon. The blessings of a nation attend him to his Western home! What are crowns, what are diadems, what are earthly possessions in comparison with the profuse and spontaneous love of a great people? It is our earnest hope and prayer that he may long be spared to devote himself to the furtherance of the honour of his country, and the promotion of the true interests of that people, who have loved him with a love such as they have never accorded to a foreign ruler.

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# APPENDIX.

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## EVIDENCE-IN-CHIEF OF The Hon. SURENDRANATH BANERJEA.

*Before the Welby Commission, May 17th, 1898.*

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### QUALIFICATIONS.

I am Honorary Secretary of the Indian Association, and have been so for the last ten years. The Indian Association is a political body which has in view the promotion of the political advancement of the people by every legitimate and constitutional means. It was founded in Calcutta in 1876, and has branch and affiliated Associations in different parts of the country. I am also a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council and have been so for the last four years, having been twice elected by the Calcutta Corporation, of which I am a member. I am also Honorary Presidency Magistrate and Justice of the Peace for the town of Calcutta, and Honorary Magistrate of Barrackpur. I am Chairman of the North Barrackpur Municipality, am Editor of the *Bengalee*, a weekly newspaper in English published in Calcutta, and am Proprietor of the Ripon College, which is an unaided independent College, teaching up to the B.A. & B.L. standards and its branches. I was President of the Indian National Congress in December, 1895.



## MACHINERY OF EXPENDITURE.

## THE INADEQUACY OF THE EXISTING FINANCIAL CONTROL.

Sir Auckland Colvin observes in the course of the evidence given by him before the Royal Commission that Government do not pay sufficient attention to what may be the financial results of the measures they adopt (*vide* page 119 of the Blue Book), and both Sir Auckland Colvin and Sir David Barbour are agreed that Heads of Departments do not take sufficient note of the financial aspects of questions. The Finance Member who is responsible for the financial well-being of the country often finds himself as one against all his colleagues. The situation is complicated by the fact that military expenditure is the most disturbing element in the problem, that such expenditure is too often governed by political considerations, and that His Excellency the Viceroy is personally in charge of the Political Department.

The Secretary of State no doubt may be found to be on the side of economy, though he may take a different view when the Viceroy is opposed to the Finance Member. But when the Secretary of State himself sanctions expenditure which is open to objection, whether on the ground of equity or law, there is no constituted authority to act as a check. The 55th section of the Government of India Act lays down that "except for preventing or repelling an actual invasion of Her Majesty's Indian possessions, or under other sudden or urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not without the consent of both Houses of Parliament be applicable to defray the expenses of any Military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by Her Majesty's forces, charged upon such revenues." The object of this enactment, as stated by Lord Derby, who was in charge of the Bill in the House of Lords, is "to protect the Indian Revenue." There have, however, been instances in which the spirit, if not the letter, of the Government of India Act has been departed from, and with the full concurrence of the Secretary of State. In England if any irregular expenditure is incurred, it is at once reported to the House of Commons. The prospect of Parliamentary interference and of the criticisms of the Opposition would act as a check upon irregular expenditure.

As regards Indian finance, however, no machinery is provided for independent and effective control. A private member may, indeed, bring up any question of Indian finance before the House ; but it is one thing for a private member to act upon his own independent and personal responsibility, and quite a different thing for a duly constituted Parliamentary Committee to look regularly into the accounts of the Indian Government. The so-called Parliamentary control over Indian expenditure is regarded by Indian public opinion as being practically without any value. The Indian Budget is discussed towards the lag-end of the Session before empty benches. As the late Mr. George Yule observed in his own felicitous language : " The six hundred and fifty odd members who were to be the palladium of India's rights and liberties have thrown the great and solemn trust of an inscrutable Providence back upon the hands of Providence to be looked after as Providence itself thinks best. The affairs of India, especially in the Financial Department, have passed with no kind of check whatever into the hands of the Secretary of State. I do not blame the present members of the House of Commons for thus abdicating the functions that their predecessors of thirty years ago assumed. The truth is they have no time to attend to the details of the trust." (Page 71, Congress Report of 1884) But though Parliament might pay but little attention to Indian affairs, a Committee of the House charged with the particular duty would do justice to it.

Under the enlarged Councils Act of 1892, the Legislative Council of India discusses the Indian Budget, and the Provincial Councils discuss the Provincial Budgets, but they are precluded from moving any resolution, or dividing the Council in respect of any financial question. Even official experts are of opinion (*vide* evidence of Sir Auckland Colvin) that not much benefit is derived either to the people or the Government from these Budget debates. The utility of the discussion of the Budget in the Provincial Councils is considerably diminished when it is borne in mind that the Budget is discussed under the orders of the Government of India only after it has received the sanction of that Government. I had ventured to suggest, by a question which I had put in Council, that the Budget might be submitted

to the Government of India, together with the record of the discussions in connection with it, when I was informed, in reply, that the procedure followed was in accordance with the orders of that Government. For the more effective discussion of the Indian Budget, as bearing upon the question of Indian expenditure, the Budgets should be laid before the Councils at least a fortnight before the discussion takes place. The Honourable Mr. Sayani, the Member representing the Bombay Presidency in the Viceroy's Council, complained that they had only a week's time to consider the Budget, and no time to get instructions from their constituents. In the Bengal Council the Budget is laid on the table only a week before the discussion. The practice involves a serious encroachment upon the rights of interpellation, in connection with the Budget, for under the rules of Council, at least six clear days' notice has to be given before a question can be put. If this rule is strictly interpreted no questions can be put upon the Budget, if it is presented only a week before the discussion; for the questions will have to be put on the very day that the Budget is presented, which, of course, is impracticable. I understand that in connection with the Bombay Legislative Council, the Budget is introduced at least a fortnight before the discussion.

There is, indeed, no reason for the restriction imposed in connection with the moving of amendments upon the Budget, having regard to the fact that there is a standing official majority in the Legislative Councils in India. No non-official member has the smallest chance of carrying an amendment, if the Government was firmly determined to resist it.

There is no sort of check upon expenditure from the taxpayer's point of view; and this check has been found most useful even in India in connection with the administration of our self-governing local bodies. Finance is their strong point, and the most notable instance in this connection is afforded by the Calcutta Municipality. The financial position of the Municipality has been strengthened under the Government of the elected Commissioners, and its credit has greatly improved. The Municipality now borrows at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Before 1891, the rate of interest was 5 per cent. It has gone down to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

What is true of the Calcutta Municipality is true of most other municipalities in Bengal, where the representatives of the rate-payers control the expenditure. It is perfectly true that even if the Members of Council had the right of moving resolutions in respect of financial matters, they would be in a minority under the existing constitution of the Council. But a unanimous, or a nearly unanimous, vote of the non-official members on a financial question would be an index of popular feeling which the Government would not ignore. I do not regard this duty of controlling the expenditure in any sense as a radical proposal or one calculated to weaken the authority of the Executive Government. On the contrary, by focussing the views of the popular representatives, it will afford the Government a valuable index of popular feeling. It is my impression, though I have not been able to verify it, and I state it for what it is worth, that in the Ceylon Legislative Council, if the non-official members are unanimous with regard to any item of expenditure in opposition to the views of the official majority, all action is suspended until the sanction of the Colonial Secretary has been obtained. Some sort of control on the part of the taxpayers has become all the more necessary when it is borne in mind that since 1865 the power of the Finance Minister in checking expenditure has been considerably weakened, owing to the military policy which has been followed in recent years.

As a further check upon expenditure I would recommend that one member of the India Council for each of the three Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras, should be elected by the non-official members of the Supreme Legislative Council. Periodical enquiry (once in every ten or twenty years) into Indian affairs by a Royal Commission or a Parliamentary Committee would also ensure the same result. The Indian public look back upon the Parliamentary enquiries of the past with mixed feelings. They regret that these enquiries should have been discontinued; they are grateful for the results which they led to. At the Parliamentary Enquiry held in 1882 Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the most illustrious name in modern India, gave his evidence, and he suggested reforms, one of which, at any rate, the separation of judicial and executive functions, has come within the range of practical politics. The enquiry led to the

enactment of the Charter Act of 1833, the 87th section of which removed a grave disability from natives of India. The subsequent Parliamentary Enquiry threw open the Indian Civil Service to general competition, from which natives of India were not excluded. Since then no Parliamentary Committee has been appointed which has borne any fruit. The people of India regard the stoppage of these enquiries as seriously interfering with their progress in obtaining a due share in the administration of their own country.

#### CONCLUSION.

The remedies, therefore, that I would suggest may briefly be summarised as follows :—

1. Members of the Legislative Councils should have the right of moving amendments and dividing the Council with regard to items in the Budget ; and the Budgets should be laid sufficiently early before the Councils to facilitate discussion.
2. A Committee of the House of Commons should be appointed to look into Indian accounts.
3. One Member of the India Council in London should be elected by the non-official members of the Supreme Legislative Council for each of the three Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras.
4. Periodical enquiries by Royal Commissions or Parliamentary Committees would promote the ends of economy and good Government.

#### PROVINCIAL CONTRACTS.

There is no question in the whole range of Indian finance of more vital importance to administrative progress, or more deserving of serious consideration, than the question relating to the working of the provincial decentralisation system. It was initiated by Lord Mayo chiefly with a view to definitely " limit for the present the expenditure from the general exchequer on certain important branches of civil expenditure, the very branches, indeed, where, from the progressive spirit of the age, the demands for increased outlay have most arisen and would most arise, and in which, from the nature of the case, the Supreme Central Authority is least able to check the requirements of the

Local Authorities." (Extract from Sir Richard Temple's speech in introducing the Financial Statement in the Supreme Council on the 9th March, 1871.) The hope was also expressed at the time by the same high authority whom I have just quoted, that the new system thus inaugurated "will teach the people to take a practical share in provincial finance and lead them gradually towards a degree of Local Self-Government, and will thus conduce to administrative as well as financial improvement." The system underwent a further development in 1877, and a still more remarkable development in 1882 under the auspices of Lord Ripon's Government. The principle was adopted that, "instead of giving Local Governments a fixed sum of money to make good any excess of provincialised expenditure over provincialised receipts, a certain proportion of the Imperial revenue of each province was to be devoted to this object. Certain headings were wholly, or with minute local exceptions, only reserved as Imperial; others were divided, in proportions for the most part equal between Imperial and Provincial; the rest were wholly, or with minute Local exceptions only, made Provincial. The balance of transfers being against the Local Governments was rectified for each Province by a fixed percentage on its land revenue (otherwise reserved as Imperial) except in Burma, where the percentage was extended to the Imperial rice export duty and salt revenue also. (Resolution of the Government of India, No. 3353, dated Simla, the 30th September, 1881.) The declaration was also made that while on the one hand Local Governments must look for no special aid from the Imperial Government, except in cases of severe famine, the Imperial Government would make no demand on them "except in the case of a disaster so abnormal as to exhaust the Imperial reserves, and to necessitate the suspension of the entire machinery of public improvement throughout the Empire." This reservation was partly modified by the subsequent orders of the Secretary of State, who empowered the Imperial Government to demand contributions from the Local Governments upon ordinary emergencies. Subsequent contracts have proceeded upon the lines of Lord Ripon's scheme, subject to modifications as to the apportionment of shares between the Imperial and the Provincial Governments. Great stress was laid upon the progress of Self-

Government as forming a part of the scheme of decentralization in finance which was referred to as affording an opportunity "for the association of natives and Europeans to a greater extent than heretofore in the administration of affairs." Provincial Governments were instructed to hand over "to Local Self-Governments considerable revenues at present kept in their hands." This has not been done to the extent contemplated.

Public attention in India has been prominently drawn to this question within the last two or three years, in view of the contracts which have just been concluded. The matter has been discussed in our Conferences, and in the Congress which sat at Calcutta in December, and the general opinion is (and it is an opinion largely shared by Local Governments and Local Officials) that the system, as judged by its practical working for the last twenty-five years, is essentially faulty, and that it needs revision. The term is too short; the resources placed at the disposal of the Local Governments meagre, and in many cases inadequate to meet the urgent needs of domestic improvement; the readjustments are followed by curtailment of domestic expenditure, and by the time the former level is reached the contract period expires and a fresh adjustment takes place, leading to a fresh curtailment of expenditure. The process continues to the detriment of the domestic interests of the country, and it leads to considerable irritation between the Imperial and the Local Governments. A system, which is attended with results such as these, must be pronounced to be faulty and to stand in need of revision.

What strikes one is the very large proportion of National Income which the Central Government reserves to itself as compared with what it allows to Local Administrations.

Taking the accounts of 1895-96, we find it is no less than fully two-thirds of the total Revenues of the country as under :—

	Crores	Crores (or in Rx. millions.)
Total Revenues	... 98·370	— 21·859 Railway Receipts
	=	
	76·511 Crores.	
Imperial Share	... 51·541 Crores,	or 68 per cent.
	Crores	Crores
Provincial and Local	... 20·8 plus 4·0	= 24·870, or 32 per cent.

"Under our present arrangements, the Imperial Government has share of *debt, army, foreign relations, railways, irrigation*

*works, post, telegraph, mint, &c.*, while almost the entire work of internal ordinary administration is left to the Provincial Governments—a division of services as between the Central and Local Administrations, much the same as we have in Federal States, and yet in none of these do we find such a large portion of National Income appropriated to the work of the Central Government. In the German Empire it is no more than thirty-five per cent. of the total Revenues ; in *Switzerland* and the *United States* the National Revenue is, roughly speaking, divided half and half between the Central and Local Administrations. Surely in a country so circumstanced as India is, and where internal improvement is an object of such paramount and transcending importance, a financial system which leaves so little for Local requirements cannot be regarded otherwise than as fundamentally wrong. Our Imperial expenditure is too high, and our army, according to the evidence of Lord Lansdowne and Sir Henry Brackenbury, is admittedly on a strength beyond our necessities, and in accordance with the requirements of Imperial policy. The army costs, exclusive of Exchange, 23·46 crores, which exceeds the cost of the army of the United Kingdom by close on six crores, and which is equal to the whole army expenditure of the Russian Empire, and amounts to thirty-two per cent. of our Revenue."

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		Revenue.	Army Expenditure.	Ratio of Army Expenditure to Revenue.
(In Millions sterling )				
Russia	... ..	115	32·9	21 per cent.
United Kingdom	...	91·3	17·8	19   "
France	... ..	138	25·9	19   "
Germany	... ..	185	24	13   "
Italy	... ..	72·4	9·4	13   "

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The next point that arrests attention in connection with these decentralization measures is that while our National Revenues are increasing, though largely through additional taxation, the Provincial Governments hardly get their fair share of the increase,



and with the necessary result that the internal progress of the country is seriously retarded, as shown in the following table :—

Years.	Imperial Sh. (In crores, or Rx. millions.)	Provincial.	Total of Imp. and Pro.
1882-83	40.37	16,394	56.70
1895-96	51.64	20,806	72.44

Thus :—

*Increase during 14 years :—*

			Crores.
Imperial share of Gen. Revenues	...		11.27
Provincial	...	...	4.472
Total	...		15.7 Crores.

From the foregoing table it will be seen that while our Revenues exclusive of Railway receipts and Local rates have increased by 15.7 crores during the past fourteen years, the Provincial share of the *increase* is even less than 5 crores, barely 4½ crores ; over 11 crores going into the coffers of the Central Government. The result is that while the Imperial Government has been able to add largely to its general expenditure, especially on military account, even in excess of the country's requirements, the Provincial Administrations have had to be content during the past fourteen years with but restricted increases even under the most useful and necessary heads of charge. It will be seen from the following table that while military expenditure, which has increased by over 6 crores from 1882-3 to 1895-6, the expenditure on some of the most important departments intimately bearing upon the improvement of the people increased only by 3 crores.

	(In crores.)		
Imperial Expenditure	1882-83	1895-96	Increase
Army Expenditure	17.100	23.460	6.36
Provincial Expenditure	1882-83	1895-96	Increase
Law and Justice	3.255	4.047	.792
Police	2.642	4.040	1.398
Education	1.145	1.536	.391
Medical Relief	.692	1.030	.338
Total	7.734	10.653	2.919

The main principles guiding the revisions of the Provincial Contracts are, as stated by Sir A. Colvin in his Financial Statement, 1887 :—

- I. " That the amount of the funds assigned to Provincial Governments need not exceed, or equal, the amount of the expenditure assigned at the time when the Contracts were made ; Provincial Governments being expected to provide by their own resources the difference between the assigned revenue and expenditure.
- II. " That the growth of Provincial expenditure during the term of a Contract must be met from growth of Provincial revenue ; except in cases where considerable expenditure is incurred by Local Governments to meet the wishes of the Government of India, and to carry into execution projects which are pressed upon it by that Government.
- III. " That the Imperial Government reserves its claim at the expiry of a term of Contract, to such share as the circumstances of the time may make necessary in the increase of revenues which have accrued to the Province during the term of the Contract, but which were reserved to the Provincial Government during such term.
- IV. " That the power of enforcing reduction, on the occasion of a new Contract, of assignments of revenue made at the previous Contract, is a condition implied in the system of Provincial Contracts, and has been uniformly acted on."

Revisions conducted upon these lines necessarily introduce an element of uncertainty into Provincial finance which must interfere with the interests of domestic progress ; and it is to be borne in mind that " financial certainty" was one of the aims which the scheme of Lord Mayo had in view. Nor does it appear that Lord Mayo's scheme contemplates periodical revisions of the Contracts.

When the Imperial and Provincial Governments both fairly start together, each with sufficient and sufficiently elastic revenues, it is only right that for all future increase of resources to meet expanding wants, they should rely, except under circumstances of abnormal pressure, on the development of their own respective sources of income. Nothing but harm could result from a periodically recurring attempt, on the part of the Imperial Government

in normal conditions to revise its financial relations with the dependent Governments, and resume for its own purposes in the whole or in part any increase of revenue which might have accrued to them. When each has to rely on its own resources, there is the strongest motive to economy and careful management all round.

The financial difficulties of the Indian Government are urged in justification of the present arrangement. They are difficulties which no responsible financial critic could ignore. But these difficulties are either temporary or permanent. If temporary, they can be met by contributions from the Local Government; if permanent, they can be provided for by permanent adjustments which would take note of such difficulties. The five years' term does not permit of any large schemes of permanent improvement being projected or taken in hand, and an uncertainty and a sense of insecurity hang over every effort of the kind; and both Sir Auckland Colvin and Sir David Barbour are in favour of longer terms being allowed for these settlements.

What is still worse, each time the Contracts are revised a reduced scale of expenditure is adopted on which to base quinquennial assignments, and only moderate increases above the scale are permitted. Thus every fifth year the Provincial resources are cut down, and Provincial progress is sensibly thrown back. The original scheme of the Mayo-Government started with a considerable reduction of grants for the services transferred (cut down almost to the level of 1863-4), and for six years afterwards very little increase of expenditure on the Provincial account occurred. Next, in 1877-8, this almost stationary level of charges (during 1871-6) was taken, with further reductions as a basis on which to regulate assignments for the following quinquennium, room being allowed only for restricted growth; the revision of 1882 was an exception, when no curtailment was effected of Provincial income. But the re-adjustments of 1887, 1891, and now of 1897, have all gone on the old principles—starting with reductions.

There is yet a further liability imposed upon the Provincial Governments, which is, however, a common incident of the system. In cases of abnormal pressure—such as war—the Central Government has the power to demand special contributions from the Provinces. But the reservation goes much further,

and contemplates special contributions even in cases of ordinary emergency. In the Mayo scheme the reservation was explicitly made of power to modify the resources granted to Provincial Governments in the event "of some fiscal misfortune, such as a heavy loss in the opium-revenue, or National disaster such as war or severe famine." In 1881-2 Lord Ripon's Government repeated the reservation, and in much more explicit terms, and declared "*That the Imperial Government will make no demand on them (i.e., Provincial Governments) except in the case of disaster so abnormal as to exhaust the Imperial reserves and resources and necessitate a suspension of the entire machinery of public improvement throughout the Empire.*" The reservation so made was one to which no exception could be taken. The Secretary of State, however, considered such qualified reservation inexpedient, and suggested that in all cases of emergency, the Provincial Governments should be liable to be called upon to contribute towards meeting the necessities of the Empire. In 1886 the India Office repeated the suggestion. The reservation as it is now in force is in the sense of this suggestion of the Secretary of State, and largely in modification of the declarations of Lord Ripon's Government in this regard. Accordingly on three distinct occasions since then, such contributions have been levied (1886-7, 1890-1, 1894-5), but they have been levied in view of ordinary deficits and under circumstances which did not amount to any such "abnormal disaster" as was contemplated in Lord Ripon's resolutions. The liability of the Provincial Governments to give special assistance in cases of emergency when so interpreted and defined goes beyond what is right and necessary, and furnishes to the Central Government a financial reserve to which, rather than enforce economy and avoid a policy of adventure, it could securely resort in case even of ordinary embarrassments.

Such is our existing system of Provincial finance. Its main features may be thus summarized :--

1. The proportion of National Revenues allotted to Provincial uses is too small and utterly inadequate for Local requirements.
2. While the Revenues of the country are expanding the Provincial Governments do not get an adequate share of such increase for purposes of Local improvement.

3. The Provincial assignments—already so meagre—are further liable to curtailments on revision in favour of the Imperial Revenues every five years. Financially, these settlements have all the evil effects of short-term settlements—taking away all certainty and stability from Provincial Administration and seriously interfering with the even progress of Provincial improvements.
4. The Provincial Governments are, besides, liable to make special contributions, even during the currency of these short-term Contracts, and that, too, in cases of ordinary emergency—a feature of the present arrangements which imports a further element of uncertainty into Provincial finance.

The theory underlying the whole system has thus been laid down by Sir James Westland from his place in the Supreme Legislative Council, in connection with the recent Budget debate. "The Revenues of India," he said, "are the Revenues of the Government of India—its constitutional possession. The Government of India is a body created by Act of Parliament,<sup>4</sup> and if reference is made to that Act of Parliament, it will be seen that the Revenues of India are the Revenues of the Government of India, and of that body alone." It is not for me to enter into the legal or constitutional aspect of this question. But the obvious inference which these remarks suggest is that the Provincial Governments, representing the people who contribute the taxes which make up the Revenue, have no part or share in the Revenues of the country, which are at the absolute disposal of the Supreme Government, and that the Supreme Government may dole out these Revenues in any way it pleases. No wonder that the working of the system has been so arbitrary, and has often led to considerable friction between the Supreme and Local Governments.

#### THE WORKING OF THE SYSTEM IN BENGAL.

In Bengal the working of the Provincial System has given rise to much dissatisfaction, and every Lieutenant-Governor since the days of Sir Rivers Thompson had had occasion to protest against it. The Contract of 1877 was very favourable to Bengal, as it made over to the Local Government three principal resources of

improvable Revenue, *viz.*, Excise, Stamps, and Registration, subject to the payment of certain progressive sums every year to the Imperial Exchequer. "These three heads of improvable Revenue made over to the management of the Provincial Government, with an income of 165½ lakhs in 1876-7, showed an income of not less than 213 lakhs in 1881-2. The whole of the increase belonged to the Local Government, subject to the reservation to which I have referred. The result was that the Local Government, besides making a special contribution to the Imperial Revenue of 20 lakhs in time of need, increased the staff of executive and judicial officers, provided increased facilities for the administration of justice, increased the Grant on Education, built schools, colleges, and hospitals, &c." (*Vide* page 22 of the Honourable Mr. Risley's Speech in the Bengal Council on the 1st April, 1893.) Along with these terms Provincial responsibility in respect of public works was enforced, and Local Governments were made responsible for great public works constructed for the benefit of the Province. Bengal was the only Province, however, which was then considered able to bear the whole of its own burden (page 16, Mr. Risley's Budget Speech of 1st April, 1893). The Public Works cess was accordingly levied, now yielding about 40 lakhs of rupees a year, for the maintenance and the payment of the cost and interest charges of certain Public Works, such as the Orissa Canal, Midnapur Canal, &c. Then came the Contract of 1882, which withdrew from the Bengal Government its full share in Excise, Stamps, and Registration. Favourable as this Contract was to the rest of India it was disastrous to Bengal.

Sir Rivers Thompson, who was Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal when the Provincial Contract for 1882-7 was in force, thus observed in his review of his five years' administration :—

"Sir Ashley Eden enjoyed the advantage of a Provincial Financial Contract with the Supreme Government, which secured to the Province under his control the entire benefit accruing from improved administration, and which in the event, yielded financial results surpassing all anticipation.....During the last five years the financial history of Bengal has been altogether different. The Contract of 1877 was succeeded by a settlement which left little scope for the development of the Provincial Revenues, and which

speedily necessitated a serious contraction in the scale of Provincial expenditure. It has often been difficult to provide adequately for the ordinary requirements of the Public Service, and it has been necessary rather to seek for opportunities of effecting economies, than of introducing administrative reforms."

The result of the Provincial Contract of 1882-7 was that some important measures, which Sir Rivers Thompson intended, could not be carried out, owing to want of means. In September, 1884, before Sir Rivers Thompson could fully realise the financial results of the Provincial Contract for 1882-7, the Government of Bengal, in reporting to the Government of India upon the proposal of the Education Commission, admitted its responsibility for increased expenditure on education to the amount, finally, of 14 lakhs a year (over and above the amount of 34 lakhs, which it was then annually expending) if the recommendation of the Commission were to be carried out to anything like completeness. Of the total increase, 10 lakhs were to be devoted to the direct improvement of primary schools. After a review of the ways and means at his disposal, the Lieutenant-Governor estimated that at the then existing rate of development of the revenue he would be able to work up to the total additional grant required in nine years by a continuous enhancement of the educational allotment to the amount approximately of Rs. 150,000 a year. The progress of events quickly falsified his anticipations. The Excise Commission was then sitting, and after it had finished its labours, several of its recommendations were partially adopted; the result was that the average annual yield of the Excise Revenue from 1883-8, was about 4 lakhs less than the revenue yield of 1883-4. The result was that the allotment for education in the sanctioned estimates for 1885-6 instead of being increased by one and a half lakhs was reduced by a lakh." Let us take another case. It is a notorious fact that in Bengal the salaries of ministerial servants attached to the Revenue and Magisterial courts are very low, and it has long been felt that their salaries should be raised with a view to their efficiency. Sir Rivers Thompson appointed a Salaries Commission in 1885, consisting of some high officers of Government. In appointing the Commission, the Lieutenant-Governor observed :—

"The rise in prices and the cost of living, which was anticipated

by Mr. Strachey in 1865, has continued at a constantly accelerating speed, and for some time past signs have been apparent that the effect of the reforms introduced in 1868 have been exhausted, and that a further advance must be made if the ministerial service is to be maintained in a condition of efficiency." The Commission, of which the Honourable Mr. Grimley, now one of the Members of the Board of Revenue, was a member, found that the purchasing power of the rupee had gone down by 75 per cent. since 1868, and they recommended that the salaries of ministerial officers ought to be increased, not only in the interest of the officers concerned, but also in the interests of the services and the public at large. But the recommendations of the Commission were not eventually given effect to. They have not yet been carried out. This year a sum of three and a half lakhs of rupees were provided for in the Local Budget with a view to give them an increment ; but the Government of India would not sanction the amount.

Sir Charles Elliott, late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, similarly complained of the manner in which the Provincial Contracts were worked in his time (and he was familiar with two Provincial Contracts, the fourth and the fifth). Thus he wrote in a resolution dated the 5th November, 1895, in taking a retrospect of the Provincial Revenues during his administration of five years :—

" On a review of the entire period, it will be seen that, besides the extraordinary benevolence of ten lakhs levied at the commencement of the period, Bengal has contributed within the last five years no less than Rs. 67,46,000 to meet the necessities of the Empire, over and above the heads of receipts ordinarily classed as Imperial, and in addition to this there has been a steady growth in the receipts divided in varying proportion between Imperial and Provincial Revenues, which, while it swelled the Provincial Revenues in the manner described above, yielded to the Supreme Government an increase of nearly fifty-one lakhs."

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, thus spoke from his place in the Supreme Legislative Council on the occasion of the debate on the Budget in the year 1896 :—

" I must say I deprecate the way in which these quinquennial



revisions have too frequently been carried out. The Provincial sheep is summarily thrown on the back, close clipped, and shorn of its wool, and turned out to shiver till its fleece grows again. The normal history of a Provincial Contract is this—two years of screwing and saving and postponement of works ; two years of resumed energy on a normal scale ; and one year of dissipation of balances in the fear that if not spent they will be annexed by the Supreme Government, directly or indirectly at the time of revision. Now all this is wrong, not to say demoralising. I say that the Supreme Government ought not to shear too closely each quinquennium."

Sir Alexander Mackenzie was equally emphatic in his condemnation of the manner in which the Provincial Contracts have recently been concluded with the Provincial Governments. He thus observed :—

I must, however, be allowed to throw out one general suggestion with reference to the policy of Provincial Contracts as at present worked. I do not entirely accept Mr. Sayani's views of these Contracts, but there is much force in some of his trenchant criticism. We have, as he has pointed out, the authority of Sir David Barbour, in his evidence before Lord Welby's Commission, for the statement that the present practice is not in accordance with the original intention. He says, 'I must say that when the Provincial system was started, I do not really think it was intended that the Provincial Government should have a portion of their resources taken away periodically.' If you take all the surplus, you, to a certain extent, remove all the inducements to the Provincial Government to economise. It is a weakness—the periodical revision may be necessary under present conditions, but it diminishes the value of the system. Take the Province of Bengal, with a population of between seventy and eighty millions of people—well, that province is big enough to have an independent financial system. He goes on to explain that, owing to financial exigencies, the Government of India takes at revision not only its own share of the increase in the divided revenues, but also a portion of the increase that has accrued to the Provincial Government. I do not know that I agree with Sir David Barbour when he says he 'would rather see the Central Government embarrassed than the Provincial Govern-

ments starved,' but he is certainly dissatisfied with the existing system. Again, my predecessor, Sir Charles Elliott, speaking with all the authority of the President of the Financial Committee of 1885-6, and an ex-member of the Supreme Council when the Bengal Contract of 1892-7 was under consideration, strongly urged a modification of the present system, 'so that the Contract should be a continuing one, not subject to sudden ruptures and renewals, but that its leading principle should be that all the revenues of the Province should be Provincial, the Government of India receiving a certain percentage on the entire sum which should be the contribution of the Province to Imperial Government and defence.' He also represented 'the unreasonableness and the hardship of requiring every Province to give up a constantly increasing share of its revenues whenever a new Contract is framed.' I am not now concerned with defending or advocating Sir Charles Elliott's particular proposals; I take, perhaps, a stronger view than he did of the claims and responsibilities of the Imperial Government. But I quote him as being, with all his unique experience, profoundly dissatisfied with the present system. Sir J. Westland will probably tell us, as he told us last year, and has quite recently told me, that Provincial Governments do not understand the system, or its *raison d'être*. My Lord, I think we do understand it—at any rate, we have learnt by suffering what we have to accept as the authoritative interpretation of it. But what I venture to urge is this, that the Government of India should, with the consent of the Secretary of State, refer the whole question to a conference at which the Provincial Governments should be adequately represented, and endeavour to lay down the lines of a system which would be satisfactory to the Provincial Governments, while meeting fairly the undoubted exigencies of Imperial finance. No system can be sound which, with all its admitted advantages of diminishing Imperial interference in petty details, leads to so much quinquennial bickering and heartburning, and involves so much uncertainty and haphazard in Provincial administration. My Lord, I wish to do nothing to diminish the power or prestige of the Imperial Government. My instincts and experience are all in favour of a strong central Administration. But I do not think that the present system is favourable to strong

administration. It places the Imperial Government in what seems to me a false position, a position of apparent antagonism to its own local agents."

The Honourable Mr. Stevens, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, and if I may be permitted to add, one of the most respected members of the Indian Civil Service, thus referred in the course of the recent debate in the Supreme Council to the many urgent reforms, including the increase of the salaries of the ministerial servants, which in consequence of the recent Provincial Contract, had to be postponed :—

" But it will not have escaped notice that, during the first three years of the quinquennial period, the balances were but little in excess of the amount which is taken to represent the minimum compatible with the convenience of the Administration, and there could be no greater error than to suppose that there are not highly important improvements, necessary to good government, for which money is urgently needed. I do not propose to enumerate these—still less to support their claims to consideration by elaborate arguments which could have no immediate practical effect. I will mention but one or two.

" In the first rank I would place the reconstitution of the General Hospital, and the improvement to something approaching an European standard of the other large hospitals in Calcutta. The condition of these most important institutions is notoriously very unsatisfactory ; yet they are not of mere provincial utility, as regards the patients who resort to them, or as regards their educational functions ; and it is not too much to say that, situated as they are in the metropolis of India, and manned, as they are, by officers selected for their efficiency by a central authority, they ought to be models for the Empire. That they should be thoroughly adapted for their purpose demands, not merely a preliminary outlay, but a persistent and recurrent expenditure.

" The case of the ministerial officers has always seemed to me to be, in the main, very hard for them and injurious to the interests of government. Salaries were for the most part fixed long ago, but while these have remained practically constant, the expense of living has been gradually and steadily rising, so that the standard either of living or of honest service must have of necessity fallen. I do not attach much weight to the argument that

when a post of even trifling value is vacant, a host of applicants at once appears. For this there may be more than one reason; but the obligation remains on Government to pay its servants enough for them to live on with sufficient comfort in their several stations. In this direction, then, there is ample and urgent need for improvement; and here, too, the necessary expenditure is not spasmodic and occasional, but continuous.

"I am confident that the personal recollections of the Financial Member of his own experiences as a Magistrate in Bengal will support me in my assertion that, considering, the dangers, the responsibilities, the powers and the temptations which are inseparable from police work, the officers of that Department, especially those in the lowest grades, are most inadequately paid. Here, too, it is constant expenditure that is required.

"Another serious want is money for the assistance of local bodies for sanitary improvement, especially for the provision of drinking water. I listened with interest to the remarks of the Finance Minister on this subject, but he has failed to convince me. It does not follow that a grant in aid of the supply of drinking water in one Province comes from the taxpayer of another. If aid is given in Bombay, there are taxpayers in Bombay. If aid is given in Bengal there are taxpayers in Bengal—many more of them than in any other Province. The Commissioner-ship of Patna alone contains nearly as many inhabitants as the whole Presidency of Bombay! The requirements of modern sanitation are growing more rapidly than the resources of these Local Authorities, and, if they are to be met at all, demand the assistance of the Government. Such assistance, spread over the whole area of this great Province, calls again for increased and continuous expenditure."

Sir Anthony MacDonnell, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, made a similar complaint last year, from his place as President of the Legislative Council of the North-West Provinces.

Thus observed Mr. Risley in his Budget Speech in 1893, contrasting the system of decentralisation of Finance in Bengal with similar systems in other countries:—"In India, on the other hand, no attempt is made to set apart certain kinds of taxation as exclusively Imperial, and the division is effected, by assigning

arbitrary fractional shares to the Provincial Governments. Similarly, the amount of contributions levied, from time to time, by the Imperial Government is not regulated by any intelligible principle, but varies like the mediæval benevolence, according to the necessities of the case."

That these complaints, on the part of high official authorities, are not unfounded, will appear from the following table, which, on my requisition, was supplied to me by the Bengal Office.

The following table shows the results of the two Contracts :—

(ooo's omitted)	1897-8 Imperial. Provincial.		1892-3 Imperial. Provincial.	
Principal Heads of Service.	12,79,17	3,72,41	13,10,21	3,03,48
Interest ... ..	16,24	3,09	15,46	1,62
Civil Debts ... ..	—	39,33	—	41,05
Miscellaneous ... ..	2,87	11,29	3,79	9,71
Railways ... ..	2,23,50	—	1,51,00	32,00
Irrigation ... ..	—	24,16	—	24,14
Civil Works ... ..	—	4,45	—	4,56
Total ... ..	15,21,78	4,54,73	14,80,46	4,16,51
Gross Total ... ..	19,76 51		18,96,97	
Percentage on total ...	77	23	78	22

From this table it will be seen that under the Contracts of 1897-8 and 1892-3, more than three-fourths of the Revenues of the Province were absorbed by the Imperial Exchequer and were devoted to Imperial purposes, and that less than one-fourth only was left for the most urgent needs of domestic improvement. The Provincial share practically remains the same for ten years, although Bengal is the most progressive of the Indian Provinces.

In consequence of the inadequacy of funds for Provincial purposes, the interests of education and of the administration of justice have not received the measure of attention which they deserve. The sums provided for under the head of Education, were :—for 1895-6, Rs. 26,07,890 ; for 1896-7, Rs. 26,75,000 ; for

1897-8, Rs. 27,46,000. I may here remark that the Budget estimate for 1896-7 provided an expenditure on education of Rs. 27,76,000, but the amount actually spent was nearly a lakh less, and the estimate for 1897-8, although in excess of the Revised Estimate for 1896-7, is nearly thirty thousand rupees less than the Budget Estimate for 1896-7. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor remarked, in his Budget Speech from his place in the Bengal Legislative Council on April 4th, 1896 :—" I admit that Bengal could usefully spend a much larger sum upon Education, and if our finances continue to prosper, I hope to increase the grant considerably. " (Council Proceedings for 4th April, 1896, Page 184.) Here we have what I take it as an admission, though undoubtedly a guarded admission, as to the inadequacy of the grant upon Education, coming from the highest authority in the Province. " Bengal could usefully spend a much larger sum " than what had been provided for in the year 1896-7, and yet the whole of the sum provided for that year was not spent. The Budget Estimate for 1896-7 provided for Rs. 27,76,000 ; the Revised Estimates came up to Rs. 26,75,000, just a lakh of rupees less than the Budget Estimates. The interests of education in Bengal have suffered in another way, owing to the strain upon Provincial Funds. Hitherto a part of the cost of Education in the interior, used to be borne in some districts by the Road Cess Fund. Under recent orders of Government, the Road Cess Fund is to be devoted exclusively to the maintenance of communications, tanks, bridges, &c. The local schools have thus to be entirely maintained out of the proceeds of pounds and ferries, and a practically fixed grant, which the Government makes. The result has been that some district schools, which have been in existence for a long time, have had to be closed. It is a complaint which the Indian public have more than once repeated, that in consequence of the pressure upon Provincial Funds, roads and communications, which used to be maintained out of Provincial Funds, have been thrown as a charge upon Local Funds, and this source of Revenue available for local purposes has thus been diverted from the maintenance of village tanks and roads to the maintenance of communications previously maintained from the Provincial Revenues. There can be no question but that the expenditure on Education per head of the population is the lowest

in India, as compared with other parts of Her Majesty's possessions, as will be seen from the following table :—

Name of Country.	Population.	State Expenditure on Education.	Expenditure per head.
United Kingdom.	39,134,116	£10,032,835	5s. 1½d.
Ceylon	... 3,008,466	Rs. 604,199	3as. 2½p.
India	... 221,172,952	Rs. 91,09,723	7·9 p.
Natal	... 46,788	£40,680	17s. 4½d.
(only white population).			
Cape Colony	... 1,527,224 *	£176,190	2s. 3d.
Canada	... 4,833,239	8,008,967 dollars	1·6 dollars.
New South Wales	... 1,132,234	£738,810	13s.
Victoria	... 1,140,405	£665,394	11s. 8d.
Austria	... 23,707,906	14,821,621 florins	·6 of a florin.
France	... 38,843,192	192,986,340 francs	5 francs.
Germany	... 51,758,264	69,305,000 marks	1·3 marks.
(on Elementary Education only).			
Russia	... 129,545,000	22,145,000 roubles	·17 of a rouble.

The expenditure under the Courts of Law in Bengal has been Rs. 88,26,340 for 1895-6 ; Rs. 88,90,000 (Revised Estimates) for 1896-7 ; and Rs. 89,42,000 (Budget Estimates) for 1897-8. There has been some increase, though part of it no doubt has been due to Exchange Compensation Allowance. Yet there is nothing about which there have been such frequent complaints as the law's delays, owing to the inadequate number of Civil Judges dealing with petty Civil cases. That the number of these Munsifs, as we call them (Civil Judges of the first instance), is inadequate to the growing demands of litigation, will appear

\* Including Kaffirs, who are four-fifths of the population, on whose education, however, very little is spent.

from the following table which was laid before the Bengal Legislative Council in reply to a question put by me :—

1	2	3	4	5	6	
Year.	Number of Munsifs.	Original suits disposed of under or- dinary procedure. Contested. Uncontested	Original suits disposed of under small cause court procédure. Contested. Uncontested.	Total.	Average number of cases disposed of per Munsif.	
1890	262	77,060	244,678	11,168 74,908	407,809	1,556
1891	275	76,815	252,339	12,660 91,075	432,889	1,574
1892	285	84,729	267,647	18,988 137,804	509,168	1,786
1893	289	82,170	268,210	21,610 151,835	523,825	1,812

From the above it will be seen that while the number of cases increased by nearly 28 per cent., the munsifs increased by 10 per cent., and yet according to Mr. Justice Prinsep, there was a surplus of nearly 14 lakhs of rupees out of Court fee stamps. (Page 123, Gazette of India, March 27, 1897.) In this connection I would observe that the European Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, a highly influential body, has recently memorialised the Government with a view to raising the pay of the Judges of the High Court.

The remarks which I have made above with regard to education and to law and justice apply with greater or less force to all departments of Civil Administration. The lower grades of Police in Bengal and the ministerial officers get virtually the pay which was fixed thirty or sixty years ago, though the price of food has increased 75 to 100 per cent. And Administration is starved in a variety of ways, and all domestic improvements retarded, while at each quinquennial settlement, the Imperial Government demands and obtains from the Provincial Government a large share of the revenues of the country.

The proposals which I would venture to submit in connection with the Provincial Contracts are these :—

1. That Sir Charles Elliott's suggestion which has been laid before the Commission by Mr. Gokhale should, if possible, be adopted. It is a proposal which would avoid revision, afford fiscal certainty, place the local administrations in possession of



adequate funds to carry on domestic improvements, and at the same time the Provincial revenues would be available for Imperial purposes which would be the first charge upon these revenues.

2. If, however, it should be found impracticable to accept this suggestion for reasons with which I am unacquainted, I would say that the period of Contract should be raised from five to ten years, that the terms of the Contract on the occasion of each revision should be laid before the Provincial Councils for discussion before final submission to the Supreme Government, the Council being empowered to move amendments in connection with the proposals submitted, and that if the Government of India should be unable to accept the terms to any serious extent (say, within fifty thousand rupees), the matter should be referred to the Secretary of State for final decision. As for allotments they should be made with due regard for provincial needs and wants, and not with reference to past expenditure or past allotments.

### THE GROWTH OF EXPENDITURE.

#### SERVICES.

The question of the wider employment of the people of India in the public service of their own country is more or less a financial problem. The expenditure has gone on increasing, especially in the Military Department ; and Indian public opinion regards the growth of Military expenditure as utterly beyond what the country can bear, and as seriously interfering with legitimate expenditure on the most necessary domestic improvements. The people of India who are capable of forming a judgment on the subject are at one with Sir H. Brackenbury in the opinion that the cost of the portion of the Indian Army in excess of what is necessary for maintaining the internal peace of the country should be met from the British Exchequer, and the expenses on the salaries of the European portion of the Army ought to be fairly apportioned between England and India. Until this is done the resources of India will not be found equal for the purposes of good and progressive Government, and no improvement is possible in the condition of the masses. By the wider employment of the people of India in the public service economy would be introduced and an impetus.

imparted to the intellectual and moral elevation of the people. Ten years ago, the Public Service Commission presided over by the late Sir Charles Aitchison, at that time Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and consisting of some of the most distinguished officials and non-official representatives of the day, reported upon the question of public employment in India. The gist of their recommendations may be summarized as follows :—That indigenous agency should be more largely employed in the public service, that the recruitment of the official staff in England should be curtailed and advantage taken of qualified agency obtainable in India. In other words, the Provincial Service recruited in India should be the backbone of the administrative agency, subject to European supervision and control. " Considerations of policy and economy alike require," observed the Commission in their Report, " that so far as is consistent with the ends of good government, the recruitment of the official staff in England should be curtailed and advantage taken of qualified agency obtainable in India." As a matter of fact, however, the higher appointments in almost all branches of the Public Service are held by Europeans, although more than ten years have elapsed since the Commission have submitted their Report. The Public Service Commission found in 1886 that out of 1,016 officers in the superior Engineer establishment, so many as 810 were non-domiciled Europeans, 119 Europeans domiciled in India, including Eurasians, and only 86 were natives of India. (Page 122, Public Service Commission Report). The Commission observed, to use their own words, recruitment from the Cooper's Hill College as being at " present excessive." We find, however, that at present there are 800 engineers of the superior establishment, of whom only 96 are Indians.

#### COVENANTED APPOINTMENTS.

The Public Service Commission recommended that one-third of the Judgeships should be held by members of the Provincial Service, the total number of District and Sessions Judges is 126, out of these five only are Indians, according to Mr. Jacob's table. This cannot be correct, for in Bengal alone we have seven District and Sessions Judgeships held by members of the Statutory Service. But even in Bengal, which is considered to be

the most advanced province in the matter of the employment of natives of India in the Public Service, the percentage recommended by the Public Service Commission has not been attained in regard to a class of appointments for which natives of India are considered to be especially qualified ; for out of thirty Districts and Session Judgeships only seven are held by members of the Statutory Service. According to the recommendation of the Public Service Commission ten of these appointments should be held by them. Further, according to the recommendations of the Public Service Commission one membership of the Board of Revenue, one Commissionership of Division, one Under Secretaryship to Government, one Secretaryship to the Board of Revenue should be excluded from the list of reserved appointments and should be held by members of the Provincial Service. With one exception, nowhere are these appointments held by members of the Provincial Service. In the North-West Provinces the Secretaryship to the Board of Revenue is held by a member of the Provincial Service. As members of the Statutory and Provincial Services draw two-thirds of the salary attached to the reserved posts, when they hold such posts, there would be considerable saving by giving fuller effect to the recommendations of the Public Service Commission. On the Bengal Establishment there are 276 civilians, including members of the Statutory and Provincial Service holding Civil Service appointments, of whom 24 are Indians, and 243 are Europeans. The monthly salaries, including the allowances drawn by the Indians, come up to Rs. 30,000 ; those drawn by the Europeans come up to Rs. 4,00,000, in round numbers.

#### THE POLICE (BENGAL GOVERNMENT).

In the same way in the Police Department the higher appointments in Bengal are practically monopolised by Europeans, though the Public Service Commission distinctly recommend (page 120 of the Report) " that endeavours should be made to introduce a reasonable proportion of native officers, due regard being always had to the efficiency of the service." Including the Calcutta Police there are 108 of these appointments from the post of Superintendents and upwards. Of these 101 appointments are held by Europeans and seven only by natives of India. The

monthly salaries, including allowances of the European employees, come up to Rs. 60,000 in round numbers, the monthly salaries of the native employees come up to Rs. 3,000 in round numbers. In this connection I may mention that a competitive examination is held in Calcutta and another in London for recruitment to the higher offices in the Police. From these examinations natives of India are excluded, although there is nothing to prevent their appearing at the open Competitive Examinations for the Indian Civil Service, provided, of course, they complied with the necessary terms and conditions. There seems to be no reason for this exclusion on the ground of race ; for the Indian District and Assistant Superintendents of Police have done their work admirably ; and one of them recently distinguished himself by the capture of a number of dacoits, as will be seen from the following report in the newspapers :—

“ Babu Girindra Chunder Mukerji, Assistant Superintendent of the Bengal Police, had an encounter with five dacoits on the road connecting Ichhapore and Shamnagar, on Saturday night. The dacoits attacked the coachman of the hackney-carriage, in which the Police Officer was driving from Naihatty to Barrackpore at midnight. Hearing the noise, he jumped out of the carriage, and caught the men. They were then placed inside the carriage and brought to the Barrackpore Police Station. They will be tried by the Deputy Magistrate of Baraset.”

Further, the exclusion of natives of India from the examinations which I have referred to is in direct conflict with the terms of the Proclamation of Her Majesty of the first November, 1858, which, in clear and emphatic terms, laid down that merit was to be the sole test of qualification for office in India, and that Indian subjects, of whatever race or creed, were to be freely admitted to all offices, the duties of which they were qualified by their ability, education, and integrity duly to discharge.

In Bengal burglaries and other offences against property are believed to be on the increase, and the people of Bengal attribute this partly to the want of detective power in the European heads of the District Police, and to their want of familiarity with our customs and language. It is a notorious fact that a District Superintendent of Police is unable, through his ignorance of the language of the people, to enquire into the ordinary cases of

thefts and burglary ; and the larger employment of Indians in the Police would, therefore, add to the efficiency of the force, while reducing the total expenditure.

#### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (BENGAL).

In the Public Works Department we find the same thing. There are 69 appointments in the superior establishments, of which 53 are held by Europeans, and 16 are held by Indians. The total monthly salaries, including allowances drawn by the Europeans, come up to Rs. 49,000, in round numbers ; the monthly salaries paid to the Indians come up to Rs. 6,000, in round numbers.

#### OPIUM DEPARTMENT.

In the Opium Department, excluding the Opium Agents and the Factory Superintendents, who are covenanted civil and medical officers belonging to the Indian Medical or the Indian Civil Service, we find there are 27 Sub-Deputy Opium Agents, classified under five grades, in the Civil List of the Bengal Presidency, corrected up to 1st January, 1897. Together, their salaries come up to Rs. 17,600. Not a single native of India has a place in these grades, although the Public Service Commission recommended "equality of treatment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects" in regard to their appointment to offices in this Department. Out of 44 Assistant Sub-Deputy Agents, there are only 9 who are natives of India. Their monthly salaries come up to Rs. 2,250. The monthly salaries paid to the European employees come up to Rs. 10,400.

#### CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

With regard to the employment of the natives of India in the Customs Department, it may not be out of place to quote the remarks of Sir Charles Trevelyan :—" There are whole classes of employment," said Sir Charles Trevelyan, " for which the natives are specially qualified. The natives are specially qualified for Revenue functions. The whole of the appointments in the Customs might be filled by natives." But what are the facts ? With one exception, the superior appointments in the Customs Department in Calcutta are filled by Europeans. Their total

monthly salaries come up to Rs. 12,360. There is not a single Hindu or Mahomedan name to be found among the officers of the Preventive Service, although the Public Service Commission recommended that "there is no ground for the exclusion of qualified candidates of any race from the appraiser's or the Preventive Branches of the Department." The Public Service Commission point out that "native Christians in Bombay have been employed in the Preventive Service, while a Brahmin Preventive Officer in Madras is admittedly efficient, and in discharging his duties has experienced no difficulty owing to his race." (Page 97, Public Service Commission Report). I have been informed that a Parsee gentleman so efficiently performed his duties as an appraiser in the Bombay Customs Department, that he was asked by the authorities, after he had retired on pension, to *rejoin* his appointment on the passing of the recent Tariff Act imposing duties on imported goods.

#### MEDICAL SERVICES (BENGAL).

In 1877 there were 67 Commissioned Medical Officers, of whom 5 were Indians. There were, in addition to the above, 28 uncovenanted Medical Officers. Of these 7 were apothecaries (all Europeans) and 3 were Indians. In 1887 there were 62 Commissioned Medical Officers, of whom only 6 were Indians. There were 29 uncovenanted Medical Officers, of whom only 4 were natives of India (the other 25 were Europeans and Eurasians (13 apothecaries and 12 non-military medical men): There were 142 Assistant Surgeons. In 1897 there were 66 Commissioned Medical Officers, of whom only 4 were Indians. Thus, practically, the number of commissioned officers on the Bengal establishment who were natives of India, remained stationary for a period extending over twenty years, from 1877 to 1897. In fact, the number in 1897 was slightly less. In 1897 there were 86 uncovenanted Civil Medical Officers, of whom only 4 were Indians, the rest were Europeans and Eurasians, 25 were apothecaries, and 7 non-military Europeans. The total amount of monthly pay drawn by the commissioned officers in 1897 was Rs. 66,024, out of which the four Indians get Rs. 3,870 per month. There are 138 Assistant Surgeons, all Indians, drawing a salary of Rs. 26,296 among them. Thus it will be seen that the 62

European commissioned officers draw more than double the salary of all the assistant surgeons in Bengal put together, whose number, it should be remarked, is double the number of the commissioned officers. Roughly speaking, the European establishment, superior and subordinate, costs about Rs. 75,000 a month; the native subordinate establishment, consisting of 138 Assistant Surgeons, costs about Rs. 26,000 a month. The European establishment thus costs about 75 per cent.; the Native 25 per cent. It will thus be seen that while the number of apothecaries holding the higher appointments has increased by over 300 per cent., the number of Natives of India employed has actually decreased. There is a distinct tendency to put the apothecaries who are now called Assistant Military Surgeons, over the heads of Indian Assistant Surgeons, although their medical training is inferior to that of the Indian Assistant Surgeons. Appointments have been taken away from the Indian Assistant Surgeons and given to the Military Assistant Surgeons. Their status has been improved. They begin on a salary of Rs. 75 a month; the assistant surgeons begin on Rs. 50 a month as super-numeraries. The pay of the Assistant Surgeons was fixed about sixty years ago as follows:—3rd grade, Rs. 100; 2nd grade, Rs. 150; and 1st grade, Rs. 200. There are, besides, a few prize appointments which carry a higher salary. The scale of pay remains unchanged after sixty years; notwithstanding the petitions presented to the Government on their behalf; notwithstanding that the pay of the subordinate judicial and executive services has been raised; and notwithstanding the fact that the price of food has more than doubled itself within the last sixty years. While the highly paid officers of Government receive Exchange Compensation Allowance, it is remarkable that this deserving class of Indian public servants should continue to draw a scale of pay which was fixed for them sixty years ago.

#### REORGANISATION OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

The Medical Service may be so organized as to lead to considerable economy without interfering with efficiency. There are at present (July, 1896) about 375 Commissioned Medical Officers in Bengal, besides 25 Military Assistant Surgeons who have received honorary commissions. Of the Medical Officers

who have received their commissions in England about one-half are employed on military duties, mainly in military charge of native regiments. The remainder are in civil employ. The medical charge of a native Regiment may with advantage be held by a native Military Assistant Surgeon instead of the more expensive commissioned European Medical Officer.

At present to each native Regiment, as well as to each detached wing or squadron, besides one Commissioned Medical Officer, one, or generally two, Hospital Assistants are attached for duty. These last receive a medical training in vernacular for three years, commence their duty on Rs. 20 a month, reaching the maximum of Rs. 80 during their service of thirty-two years. The Commissioned (European) Medical Officer, when in charge of a Regiment, commences with a minimum of Rs. 386 per month, plus on the average 12 per cent. on his pay as Exchange Compensation Allowance. In a Cavalry Regiment he draws Rs. 65 in addition for Horse Allowance. The pay increases according to the length of service, and there is nothing to prevent him from holding the medical charge of a Regiment for the entire period of his service. Thus, after twenty years' service, he may draw Rs. 1,000 per month—exclusive of allowances—for doing the same work for which he received Rs. 386, plus allowance when he joined the Service. I submit there is no necessity for keeping up such an expensive system, for the following reasons :—The duties of a Military Medical Officer are of two kinds ; first, such as those that devolve upon him in cantonments, and those that he is called upon to perform in war-time. In cantonments the average daily sick in a Regimental Hospital is under four per cent. of the strength. That is, in a Regiment of between 800 or 900 men the numbers of sick Sepoys present in hospital rarely exceeds twenty or twenty-five. In a Cavalry Regiment the number is considerably less. The cases as a rule are mostly of a trivial nature, and can be easily treated by a properly qualified native Assistant Surgeon. I consider it an unnecessary waste of money to pay 800 or 1,000 Rs. a month to look after twenty sick Sepoys, most of whom are in hospital for very trifling complaints. As for the British officers attached to a native Regiment, I would suggest that they and their families may be looked after by an officer of the Army Medical Staff. Excepting in the Punjab



frontier and Assam there is always a detachment of British troops wherever native Regiments are stationed. The Army Medical Staff Officer in medical charge of the British troops can, for a small additional consideration, look after the British officers and their families. On the Punjab frontiers there are generally two native Regiments with a battery of artillery stationed at one place. The senior Medical Officer also performs the duties of the Civil Surgeon of the Station. I would suggest that one Army Medical Staff Officer with a sufficient number of native Assistant Surgeons can perform all the duties just as well and far more inexpensively than what obtains at present.

As for the Medical Service in war time it is admitted that the present arrangement is unsatisfactory. The greatest difficulty is experienced to obtain a sufficient number of Medical Officers. The only alternative is to engage a large number of Commissioned Medical Officers for whom, as I have shown above, there is hardly any work during peace time. The remedy I would suggest is that a sufficient number of native Military Assistant Surgeons may be trained in the country—paid on the scale of Civil Assistant Surgeons, and who will perform all the professional duties—the administrative portion of them being left to experienced officers of the Army Medical Staff. In place of the present system of imperfectly qualified Hospital Assistants and a limited number of very highly paid Commissioned Medical Officers there will be a large number of properly qualified men who will, for all practical purposes, be quite equal to their duties during peace or war.

The present Civil Medical system is open to greater objection. A Civil Surgeon of a district is supposed to look after one or two Hospitals at the Head-quarters of a district. Generally speaking, he is in charge of the district jail—not only as a medical officer but as its superintendent. He is the Superintendent of Vaccination for the district as well as sanitary adviser to the head of the district. This by no means finishes the category of his duties. A Lunatic Asylum—a Leper Asylum or a Blind Asylum—sometimes all three, are thrown in the lot. He is also responsible for the meteorological returns of his district. First, as to Hospital work. At places like Benares, Agra, Lucknow, the Civil Surgeon is supposed to look after over 125 beds in the different

Hospitals scattered through the town; while at Jessore, Faridpur, Noakhaly, the number of beds varies between ten and twelve. It will strike most people that 125 patients are more than what can be properly attended to by a single medical officer, and that looking after five or six patients in hospital is hardly exhaustive work for one medical man. But such is the curious anomaly of the system, that not only the same emoluments are received by the two Medical Officers so differently situated, but the one who has almost nominal work to do can by the present arrangement draw more pay than his infinitely more hard-worked *confrere*. To do away with all these anomalies, and for the better management of hospitals, I would suggest, and I believe the time has arrived to carry out the suggestion, that the system which, I understand, obtains in England may be partially adopted in India. There is a large number of properly qualified independent medical men trained in India as well as in Europe, who will accept the post of Honorary Surgeons and Physicians in the large hospitals at the Head-quarters of the provinces and districts. As to the fitness of the Indians to hold such appointments I would point to the Campbell Hospital, Calcutta, to the comparative list of surgical operations performed by Commissioned European Medical Officers and Indian Civil Assistant Surgeons, as well as to the few Indian Commissioned Medical Officers who have been permitted to hold Civil appointments. In large towns there is generally a hospital for Europeans exclusively. At all these places there are highly qualified independent European medical practitioners, who I am sure will be only too glad to offer their services gratuitously to such institutions. As for the Hospitals for Indians, I would suggest that the appointment of Honorary Physicians and Surgeons may be left in the hands of the municipalities or other local bodies. All the Hospitals suffer for want of funds. The Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, North-Western Provinces, observes in his triennial report, ending December 31st, 1895 (page 20), "As a consequence of the want of means many Civil Surgeons not only find the greatest difficulty in meeting the demands for the most ordinary and inexpensive medicines, but have also to defer or abandon the purchase of necessary instruments." Proper diet, which is such an important factor in the treatment of diseases, is supposed to be adequately supplied

at the average cost of one anna per diet. (Page 55, N. W. P. Triennial Report, and page 93, Annual Report of the Dispensaries in the Punjab for 1895.) At some, places, such as Jhelum and Pind Dadan Khan, that modest amount is supposed to be quite large enough to meet the expenses of even two diets. When it is considered that the average famine diet costs about two annas per head, the sum expended in the nourishment of sick patients in the Indian Hospitals cannot be open to the accusation of wanton waste. At the Ramsay Hospital at Naini Tal, which is a hospital for Europeans, the average cost of each diet is Rs. 3-0-9 (page 75, Triennial Report of the Dispensaries of N. W. P., ending 1895), which shows that it is supposed to be the proper expense for a sick diet; and the contrast between this diet and that allowed to the sick natives of India is striking.

Such being the state of things it is highly uneconomical to keep up a large number of Military Medical Officers at an enormous cost. In some hospitals the pay alone of the Commissioned Medical Officer comes up to more than the combined expenses of assistants, menial establishment, medicines, surgical instruments, and dieting of all the hospitals and dispensaries of the entire district.

As for instance, the total expenditure during 1895 stood thus in the following districts in the N. W. P.:—

Almora ...	...	Rs. 5,082	2	5,	page 51	} Triennial Report, ending 1895.
Dehra Dun ...	...	Rs. 6,582	1	3,	page 59	
Etawah ...	...	Rs. 5,806	14	11,	page 63	

If the above were in charge of a Surgeon Captain his pay would come up to Rs. 6,600 a year, exclusive of Exchange Compensation allowance. By adopting the method here suggested there would be considerable saving of expense.

#### FOREST DEPARTMENT (BENGAL)

There are 23 superior appointments in the Forest Department. With a single exception they are all held by Europeans. The monthly salaries drawn by the European members of the Forest Service come up to Rs. 12,100; the salary drawn by the single Indian member of the Service is Rs. 300 a month. The Public Service Commission recommended that "the staff should be divided into an Imperial and Provincial Branches, and that as in

the Imperial Civil Service the Imperial Branch of the Forest Service should be a *corps d'élite* limited to the number of officers necessary to fill the superior controlling appointments and such a proportion of the Assistant Conservators' posts as will ensure a complete training of the junior officers." They further recommended "that the Government should keep in view the policy of training in India men qualified to take charge of the higher administrative appointments so as to avoid as far as possible the necessity for expanding the Imperial branch of the Service." From the facts stated above, it does not appear that any serious effort has been made to train natives of India so that they might take charge of the higher appointments, for with one exception these appointments are filled by Europeans.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE (BENGAL).

The Educational Service in Bengal, which has recently been reorganised, has given rise to much dissatisfaction. Under the orders of the Secretary of State "the Department is to be divided broadly into (a) the superior service and (b) the subordinate service. The former will consist of two branches, one including all posts to be filled by persons appointed in England, which will be called 'The Indian Educational Service,' and the other including all posts to be filled by recruitment in India, which will be known as 'The Provincial Educational Service.' The Indian Educational Service will consist of 27 officers. The Provincial Service is to consist of 104 officers. The recruitment for the Indian Educational Service taking place in England, it need hardly be observed that natives of India will have little or no chance of appointment to the superior grade. Indeed, it would seem from the orders of Government that natives of India with degrees from the Universities of England, Scotland, and Ireland are now to be admitted only to the Provincial Service, for we find the following laid down in the scheme as sanctioned by the Secretary of State :—

"The Provincial Educational Service is to consist of 104 officers, as follow :—

- 5 Inspectors of Schools,
- 10 Assistant Inspectors.
- 7 Principals, and

51 Professors of Colleges.

24 Head-masters of Collegiate and Training Schools.

7 Others, including the (1) Assistant Superintendent and the (2) Head-master of the School of Art, (3) the Personal Assistant to the Director of Public Instruction and (4) supernumerary appointments (Professorships) to be filled by Indian gentlemen with degrees from the Universities of England, Scotland and Ireland, or by Premchand Roychand students."

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Total 104

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The concluding words of the extract which I have quoted support the view which I have put forward, *viz.*, that it appears to be the intention of the Resolution to confine the employment of Indians practically to the Provincial Service. There is absolutely no reason for this exclusion, when it is borne in mind that Indian gentlemen in the Educational Service, with degrees from the English Universities, have attained to the distinction which has been achieved by men like Dr. Bose and Dr. P.C. Roy. They are able to hold their own against any Englishman in the particular departments in which they have won distinction; but in future, under the operation of the new scheme, men like them will be relegated to the Provincial Service. It is indeed the case that the Government of Bengal itself is not satisfied with the scheme, inasmuch as the prospects of the officers in the lower grade are very discouraging and the scheme fixes the pay of the lowest grade of the Provincial Service at Rs. 150 a month, while the pay of the lowest grade in the other Provinces appears to be higher. This is what Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, observed in this connection in his Resolution, dated 26th March, 1897 :—" His Honour observes that, owing to the narrowness of the scale of the Provincial Service, as compared with existing salaries, the prospects of officers in the lower classes are very discouraging. For instance, officers now placed in Class VI on Rs. 250 of the Service, are all in Class III (Rs. 200-21-300) of the existing Service, and before they can receive any increase of pay, they must rise to the top of Class VI and then move slowly to the top of Class V. He also observes that the Provin-

cial Services of other Provinces are practically devoid of Class VIII, on Rs. 150. Sir Alexander Mackenzie regrets this state of things, and, with a view to improving the prospects of the Provincial Service, he proposes at an early date to consider whether something may not be done by assigning a greater number of officers to some of the intermediate classes."

**THE SURVEY DEPARTMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.**

The Public Service Commission in their Report observe that the admission to the junior division should not be confined to special classes of Her Majesty's subjects (evidently referring to the practical exclusion of Indians from the Provincial Service of the Department), but that it should be recruited by competition from among selected candidates (page 152, Public Service Commission's Report). In this Department there has always been considerable objection to the employment of Indians as will be seen from the following memorandum written by Col. De Pru, late head of the Survey Department, which was laid before the Public Service Commission :—

"I may here remark incidentally that my numerous late inspections show me that the tendency of the European Surveyors is to stand and look on, while the natives are made to do the drawing and hand-printing, as if they thought themselves quite above that sort of thing. This is a mistake, and cannot be permitted for the future. Besides, it is suicidal for the Europeans to admit that natives can do any one thing better than themselves. They should claim to be superior *in everything*, and only allow natives to take a secondary or subordinate part.

"In my old parties, I never permitted a native to touch a theodolite or an original computation on the principle that the triangulation or scientific work was the prerogative of the highly-paid European, and the reservation of the scientific work was the only way by which I could keep a distinction so as to justify the different figures respectively drawn by the two classes between the European in office-time and the native who ran him so close to all the office duties as well as on field duties. Yet I see that natives commonly do the computation, and the Europeans some other inferior duties."

The Public Service Commission also noted the objection to the

employment of natives of India in their Report, and they observe :—" The Junior Division has been hitherto officered for the most part by Europeans domiciled in India and Eurasians, of whom many have passed the Matriculation Examination of the Indian Universities. . . . In the year 1884 the Government of India determined that natives should be employed in the Junior Division, believing that educated or trained natives could be found who were competent to perform all the duties of the subordinate staff, and that as the competence of such natives had not been made the subject of trial the presumption of incompetence could not be admitted." (Page 132).

The fact seems to be forgotten that at one time the head of the Computing Department of the great Trigonometrical Survey was a Bengal gentleman (Baboo Radhanath Sikdar), who performed his duties with remarkable ability and efficiency. As it is we find that in the Survey Department, out of 119 appointments in the Provincial Service, only 10 are held by Indians. The monthly salaries and allowances paid to European employees come up to Rs. 35,715, while the monthly salaries paid to Indian employees come up to Rs. 2,012. There is not a single Indian in the six grades of Extra Assistant Superintendents, comprising appointments the salaries of which vary from Rs. 300 to Rs. 500 a month.

#### THE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

There are in the Indian Telegraph Department 82 superior appointments, exclusive of the Examiner and Deputy Examiner of Accounts. All these appointments, with two exceptions, are held by Europeans, and by students passing from Cooper's Hill College. The monthly salaries drawn by the European employees come up to Rs. 56,025 ; the Indian member of the Telegraph Department, who is also a passed student of Cooper's Hill College, draws a monthly salary of Rs. 300. There is one other Indian member of the Department who is appointed on the Provincial scale of pay and gets Rs. 150 a month. The Government of India resolved, on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission, to make some appointments to the Telegraph Service on the Provincial scale of pay, which is about 66 per cent. of the scale of English pay, from among the native

students of the Thomason College, Roorkee (*vide* Government of India Resolution No. 156 P. E. of 25th August, 1892, P. W. D.) Since the publication of this Resolution, 21 appointments have been made, out of which four have been made in India, and of the four only one has been given to an Indian ; the other three have been conferred on Eurasians. If the Government had exercised the powers which it assumed by the Resolution referred to above more largely, and the terms of which are quoted in the margin,\* there would have been a saving of expenditure and a proportionate relief to the finances. The Thomason Engineering College is equipped for the purpose of turning out duly-qualified candidates for the Telegraph Service. There seems to be little doubt that some of the Indian Colleges are turning out students whose services might with advantage be utilized for the Telegraph and other scientific departments with considerable relief to the public exchequer. Dr. J. C. Bose, Professor of Science in the Government Presidency College in Calcutta, who has acquired a European reputation by his discoveries in connection with electrical science, thus observed in a paper that he read in this country on the Progress of Science Teaching in India :—"The advanced students, whom we hope to train in our laboratories, will form the best material for recruitment to the various scientific departments under the State. The students who now work in electric science in our Presidency College Laboratory acquire a very high efficiency in it, and it would be an advantage to the Telegraph Department to utilise their services. Indeed, this was at one time contemplated, and Sir Alfred Croft, the retiring Director of Public Instruction, interested himself in it. It is to be hoped that something will be done in this direction." If the hope expressed by Dr. Bose is fulfilled a considerable impetus would be imparted to the teaching of science in India, and the interests of economy would also be ensured. The Public Service Commission practically made the same recommendation. They recommended the gradual reduction of the staff recruited in

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\* "The number of appointments shall ordinarily be two and one in alternate years, but these numbers may be varied according to the requirements of the Department, due notice whereof will be given."



England, and that a superior local Telegraph Service should be recruited in India from classes to be established at one or more of the Indian Engineering Colleges (page 139).

There are 85 Sub-Assistant Superintendents, divided into two grades, 41 being in the first grade and 44 in the second grade. The maximum pay allowed in the first grade is Rs. 350 per mensem; in the second the maximum is Rs. 275 per mensem. There are only two Indians in these two grades. If the Department were reorganised, and native Indians employed more largely, it would be possible to place it upon a more economical footing.

It would seem that all Telegraph masters and signallers receive in addition to their substantive pay an allowance in the shape of house rent of Rs. 15 and Rs. 10 per month respectively when posted to Presidency Towns, and Rs. 10 and Rs. 5 respectively when employed in outstations. But this rule does not apply to natives of India. In other words, it is only the European and Eurasian Telegraph masters and signallers who are entitled to this privilege. In 1882 the Government of India, in the Public Works Department, issued the orders granting house allowance to all Telegraph masters and signallers with the exception, of course, of such as were provided with quarters. In 1883, orders were issued that native telegraph masters and signallers were not entitled to the allowance. Some native Christian signallers, who had adopted the European mode of living, prayed for this house allowance, when they received the following letter in reply :—

*From THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF TELEGRAPHS,  
To THE SUPERINTENDENT, CALCUTTA OFFICE,  
No. 3375T, dated 26th September, 1890.*

SIMLA.

SIR,—With reference to your letter No. 2596T, dated the 16th of September, 1890, I have the honour to inform you that under the orders of the Government of India Native signallers, as distinguished from European and Eurasian signallers, are not entitled to house allowance when not provided with quarters. By natives must be understood pure Asiatics, and the details of

religion and dress that may be adopted by natives are questions which do not enter into the matter.

2. I am unaware of any special exceptions to this rule that may have been made in former years, but if such exceptions exist, they afford no grounds for any further additions to them being made.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) C. H. REYNOLDS,  
*Director, Traffic Branch.*

The House allowance granted to Telegraph masters and signallers comes up to the sum of Rs. 7,661-2 ans. a month, or nearly a lakh of rupees a year. The details are given in the following statement :—

#### GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

House allowance drawn by the Europeans and Eurasian signallers serving in the following Telegraph Divisions.

					Rs.	A.	P.
1	Bellary Division	...	...	...	37	8	0
2	East Coast	...	...	...	35	0	0
3	Madras	...	...	...	919	13	9
4	Bombay	...	...	...	2,485	6	8
5	Nagpur	...	...	...	53	8	0
6	Rajputana	...	...	...	892	1	1
7	Sind and Beluchistan	...	...	...	418	6	4
8	Punjab	...	...	...	416	0	0
9	Kashmere	...	...	...	342	5	8
10	Bengal	...	...	...	280	15	0
11	Arrakan	...	...	...	143	0	0
12	Lower Burmah	...	...	...	374	0	0
13	Upper Burmah	...	...	...	279	0	6
14	Calcutta	...	...	...	1,422	1	0
15	Oudh and Rohilkhund Division	...	...	...	62	0	0
16	Assam and Dacca Divisions	...	...	...	nil		
					<hr/>		
					7,661	2	0

Because the signallers and the telegraph masters in these two divisions are provided with quarters.

1. Number of *European* and *Eurasian* Telegraph masters... 157

(Draw Rs. 15 and 7½ when posted to Presidency towns and moffusil respectively when not provided with quarters.)

2. Number of *European* and *Eurasian* signallers ... 1,145.

(Draw Rs. 10 and 5 when posted to Presidency towns and mufussil respectively when not provided with quarters.)

	Total ...	1,302
Number of <i>Native</i> Telegraph masters	... ..	15
Number of <i>Native</i> signallers	... ..	324
	Total	339 339
	Grand Total	1,641

If all Telegraph masters and signallers were natives, it is very obvious that under the existing rules the whole of this amount would be saved, and the saving would be in proportion to the employment of natives as telegraph masters and signallers. The distinction is invidious, and causes bitterness and ill-feeling between persons working in the same department, and to the prejudice of public business.

#### THE POST OFFICE.

The all but practical exclusion of Indians from the higher appointments in the Post Office is felt as a grievance. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, one of the leading organs of public opinion in Bengal, refers to the subject in a leading article in its issue of the 7th April last, headed "European Monopoly of Post Office." The facts stated are remarkable, and I desire to submit them for the consideration of the Commission. The state of things in 1896 stood as follows :—

	European.	Native.
Chief Officers	28	2
Superintendents	85	35
Sea Postal Officers	5	7
Miscellaneous Officers	18	22
Post Masters	42	23
Total	173	89

Since then there has been no appreciable improvement, as will be seen from the following facts mentioned by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, from an official statement containing the names of chief officers and 1st grade superintendents, corrected up to the 1st May, 1896.

The Director-General of the Post Office is a European, and he draws Rs. 3,000 a month. The Post-Masters-General of Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Burmah and the Punjab are all Europeans, and their respective salaries per month are 2,000, 1,750, 1,750, 1,500 and 1,400 Rs. The Post-Master-General of the N. W. Provinces only is an Indian, Mr. K. J. Badsha, his salary being Rs. 1,750. But he is a civilian, and he has access to the highest post in any department under the State. Let it also be borne in mind that the Post-Master-Generalship of the N. W. Provinces was reserved especially for an uncovenanted officer of Asiatic race. The Postal authorities, in their evidence before the Service Commission, admitted this fact.

As regards the other chief officers :—The Deputy Director-General, pay Rs. 1,750 ; the Inspector-General, Railway Mail Service, pay Rs. 1,400 ; Assistant Inspector-General, Railway Mail Service, pay Rs. 500 ; three Assistant Directors-General, pay Rs. 1,000, Rs. 700 and Rs. 700 respectively; 1st grade Deputy Post-Master-General, pay Rs. 1,400 ; two 2nd grade Deputy Post-Masters-General, pay Rs. 1,000 each; three 3rd grade Deputy Post-Masters-General, pay Rs. 700 each ; and one Deputy Post-Master-General, pay Rs. 500, are all whites. There is only one Indian amongst these officers, namely, Mr. C. J. Lalkaka, who officiates as Inspector-General, Railway Mail Service, on Rs. 800 a month.

The other chief officers are one Comptroller, pay Rs. 1,200 ; one Deputy Comptroller, pay Rs. 700 ; two Assistant Comptrollers, pay Rs. 600 and 500 respectively. With the exception of the Deputy Comptroller, Babu Woma Charan Dass, all others are Europeans.

We now come to the lowest class of chief officers, namely, Presidency Post-Masters. There are three of them, namely, Post-Master, Bombay, pay Rs. 900 ; Post-Master, Calcutta, pay Rs. 800 ; and Post-Master, Madras, pay Rs. 750. Every one of them belongs to the white race.

Next to chief officers are first-class Superintendents, pay Rs. 400—500 per mensem. We find in the statement before us the names of twenty-one such Superintendents. It was expected that, at least in this class of officers, the Indian element would prevail over the European. For it is essential that these

Superintendents should have a thorough and intimate knowledge of the vernaculars of the country to carry on their duties with village Post-Masters. But what do we find? Only *four* are Indians, and the remaining eighteen Europeans.

So, out of 46 Chief Officers and 1st grade Superintendents, there are only *six* pure Indians, the two Indian Chief Officers being almost in the lowest grade.

Yet the Post Office was one of those departments in respect of which no one who was not a native of India could hold any appointment carrying a salary of Rs. 200 a month and upwards without the previous sanction of the Governor-General.

#### GENERAL STATEMENT WITH REGARD TO THE SERVICES.

With reference to the services, I may here observe that the Indian public view with grave disappointment the fact that effect has not been given to the resolution of the House of Commons of the 2nd June, 1893, on the question of simultaneous examinations. In the opinion of the educated community in India, Her Majesty's Proclamation of the 1st November, 1858, declaring merit and not race as the sole test of qualification, will remain unfulfilled so long as simultaneous examinations in connection with the Indian Civil Services are not held in India as well as in England. This was, indeed, the view put forward with special reference to the open Competitive Examinations for the Indian Civil Service by a Committee of the India Office which reported on this matter in 1861. They observed :—

"It is obvious, therefore, that when the competitive system was adopted it could not have been intended to exclude natives of India from the Civil Service of India. Practically, however, they are excluded. The law declares them eligible, but the difficulties opposed to a native leaving India and residing in England for a time are so great that, as a general rule, it is almost impossible for a native successfully to compete at the periodical examinations held in England. Were this inequality removed we should no longer be exposed to the charge of keeping promise to the ear and breaking it to the hope.

"Two modes have been suggested by which the object in view might be attained. The first is by allotting a certain portion of the total number of appointments declared in each year to be competed for in India by natives, and by all other natural-born subjects of Her Majesty resident in India. The second is to hold simultaneously two examinations, one in England and one in

India, both being, as far as practicable, identical in their nature, and those who compete in both countries being finally classified in one list, according to merit, by the Civil Service Commissioners. The Committee have no hesitation in giving the preference to the second scheme, as being the fairest and the most in accordance with the principles of a general competition for a common object."

Numerous petitions have been presented to the House of Commons from all parts of India for effect being given to the resolution of the House. But the resolution remains a dead letter. It may generally be stated that if the great departments were recruited upon the principle that wherever a native of India was qualified for an office he should be appointed to it, and if the pay was adjusted with reference to the local marketable value of the qualifications required, a considerable saving in public expenditure would follow.

#### EXCHANGE COMPENSATION ALLOWANCE.

The employment of a costly European agency in the administration to a larger extent than what the financial condition of the country justifies has a financial bearing which is not to be overlooked. Exchange Compensation Allowance has been granted to the non-domiciled European employees of the Government. In 1893-94 Exchange Compensation Allowance came up to Rx. 624,411; in 1894-95 it rose to Rx. 1,249,591; and in 1895-96 it rose to a still higher figure, *viz.*, Rx. 1,338,163. The Indian Association, of which I am the Secretary, protested against the grant of Exchange Compensation Allowance, and addressed a communication to the Government of India on the subject. The Government admitted that the servants of Government to whom Exchange Compensation Allowance had been granted had no legal claim to it. A member of the Bengal Civil Service, Mr. Lea, refused to draw the allowance, on the ground that he was not legally or morally entitled to it. If Exchange Compensation Allowance had been granted upon the actual remittances sent home for family purposes, no matter whether by Indian or European servants of the Government, one of its most objectionable features would have been withdrawn, though Indian opinion would still have condemned it. As a matter of fact, there are at present in England members belonging to the families of Indian

gentlemen in the Civil and Medical Services, for whose maintenance and education those gentlemen make regular remittances. They draw no Exchange Compensation Allowance. On the other hand, a large proportion of European gentlemen in the Civil Service, who are unmarried, and have no remittances to make for their families, get Exchange Compensation Allowance. As it is Exchange Compensation Allowance is granted to all non-domiciled European servants of the Government, no matter whether they joined the service before or after the depreciation in the value of the Rupee had begun. It is granted to those whose salaries are fixed by statute, and a question has been raised as to whether they are entitled to it, but all the same they continue to draw it. . . . More than a crore of rupees is spent to provide Exchange Compensation while so important a question of domestic reform as the separation of judicial and executive functions in the administration of criminal justice cannot be taken up for the alleged want of funds. Salaries should be fixed according to the importance of the duties to be performed, and the market price of the labour of men competent to discharge those duties. . . .

#### APPORTIONMENT OF CHARGES.

With regard to the second part of the reference, viz., the apportionment of charges for purposes in which both countries are interested, I beg to observe that Indian public opinion supports the view that India should be chargeable with the cost of the native army necessary for the maintenance of internal peace, but that the European army and the European officers in the native army being quite as much necessary for British as for Indian interests, the British Exchequer should in justice pay a fair share towards their maintenance. With regard to the North-Western Frontier wars much has already been said, and I shall only repeat that as these wars concern the interests of both countries the expenses connected therewith should be equitably adjusted between them. If in this adjustment there should arise differences of opinion as to the proportion to be paid between the two countries, some machinery for arbitration should be devised.

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